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Sprachgefühl: Development of a Measurement Technique

by

© Gunilla Christine Laurell

A THESIS

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Date: 25 April 1984

Abstract

This study investigated the possibility of designing an error-detection and correction task (in the written mode) which would serve as an evaluation metric to distinguish advanced second language learners of French from those who are less advanced. The error-detection and correction task incorporated a total of 30 errors, 13 of which were categorized as 'syntactically-conditioned' and 17 as 'semantically-conditioned.' The purpose for establishing the error categories in this manner was to try to tap the subjects' formal linguistic knowledge as well as his/her intuitive knowledge regarding the target language, namely, his/her native-like 'feel' (sprachgefühl).

The experiment was carried out on 60 native English speaking subjects at basically three different levels of proficiency in French: Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced. Subjects were asked to read a letter written in French by a native English speaker. This letter provided a context for the 30 errors mentioned above. Secondly, subjects were asked to proof-read this letter, making any corrections or changes they believed to be necessary. They were then requested to give either a formal grammatical rule or some form of explanation for each change or correction made.

The results of the analysis on the scores obtained by the three proficiency groups revealed that the 30 test items did significantly discriminate the performance of these

groups. Six errors of a high level of difficulty were especially selected to differentiate the group of advanced learners. The performance of the Advanced group demonstrated that, at least for this particular set of errors, this hypothesis is upheld.

With regard to the group performances in providing rules and/or explanations for corrections made, it was discovered that the Advanced group used a significantly greater number of formal linguistic rules than did the Intermediates or Beginners. These findings suggest that Advanced learners have more explicit knowledge at their disposal, complemented with their heightened sensitivity to errors which required a native-like understanding of certain idiosyncracies in the language. Beginners exhibited a strong propensity to hyper-correct and also gave much less detailed explanations than the Advanced and Intermediate subjects.

Several learner-related factors were considered for the analysis and interpretation of results: sex, age, number of years of education, formal language training, immersion experience, and the learner's perception of his/her language learning ability. Immersion experience emerged, not surprisingly, as a positive factor in the subjects' performance on the task.

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It feels different to talk one language than to talk another. You talk about different things and you talk about things from different points of view. The problem is how to capture this difference.

(Haugen, 1970)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the study reported in this thesis an error-detection and correction task was adopted as the paradigm to investigate the possibility of designing a methodological technique which would distinguish advanced adult second language learners of French from other adult second language learners of French. More precisely, it was devised to distinguish those who have attained a native-like competence in the second language (as a result of a highly developed sensitivity for the language, henceforth known as 'sprachgefühl') from those who have not acquired a native-like competence in the language. Such a task incorporates both formal and intuitional information and also provides a means for testing the role of implicit or intuitional knowledge as well as explicit formal rule knowledge. By distinguishing one learner type from another it is assumed that different learner characteristics and different strategies would be represented by the two groups.

Since the initial step in any form of empirical investigation is to provide adequate methodological tools for measuring the phenomenon under investigation, the research reported here simply addressed the issue as to whether or not the 'sprachgefühl' phenomenon is a quantifiable entity. The issues of the learners' characteristics and strategies are not the focus of this particular investigation but they are addressed in terms of

how they could be treated in future research.

Background to the Problem

In the second language (L_2) acquisition research literature, it has been recognized for some time that, not unlike first language learners, second language learners eventually acquire a native-like feeling for the target language and some moreso than others. It seems that advanced L_2 learners who can make intuitive judgements about the grammaticality or appropriateness of an utterance have a general feeling for the utterance as a whole even though they cannot always articulate precisely, nor even recognize where or what the trouble spot is. Like the native speaker, the L_2 learner can develop and use both syntactic and semantic intuitions regarding the target language structures and phonology. Such intuitions entail making judgements concerning the well-formedness or ill-formedness, the acceptability or unacceptability of an utterance.

The ability of L_2 learners to develop such an appreciation for the nature or spirit of the second language in general has been termed by some as 'sprachgefühl,' the German translation meaning "feeling for the language." This term has been adopted into English and defined more explicitly in Webster's as: a sensibility to conformance with or divergence from the established usage of a language, a feeling for what is linguistically effective or appropriate. Sprachgefühl judgements can be made in the

descriptive and prescriptive sense, including intuitions about the lexical or social appropriateness of a word or a given sequence of words.

Current Views on Sprachgefühl Development

It is generally agreed upon by L_2 teachers and researchers that part of what is involved in becoming more proficient in a second language is the progression from a primary gestalt-like 'gefühl' analysis to a more analytical or explicit analysis. Initially, learners appear to have a general feeling of what is right or wrong without being able to zero in on the precise nature of the error when there is one. In this light, it has been postulated that L_2 learners are able to make a gestalt-type analysis of sentence structure before they are able to make detailed analytical judgements (Gass, 1983). Hence, a learner's analytical ability has been hypothesized to develop as a function of proficiency.

L_2 researchers have interpreted this to mean that there is, in turn, not as great an increase in the range of one's feel for the language (one's 'sprachgefühl') as a function of proficiency, as there is an increase in the ability to pinpoint the trouble spot and to specifically recognize what is wrong. There is further speculation that the analyzed aspect is a necessary precondition for fluency in a second language moreso than for the first language. Such a hypothesis is not at all unreasonable given that, in the

initial stages of acquiring the target language, learners can exhibit a generalized feeling for what is right or wrong. However, it may be suggested that this sprachgefühl then continues to be refined so that more explicit and accurate assessments can be made.

Such a gradual change has been perceived by some researchers as an indication that a transition from an implicitly based knowledge to an explicitly based knowledge is taking place. The explicit knowledge is characterized as the learner's analytic metalinguistic ability, i.e., the learner's ability to view the language as an objective entity (but this ability does not necessarily entail explicitly stating a rule). As Bialystok (1981) has pointed out, sometimes sentences may sound right or wrong for reasons that may be completely obscure and in these cases justifications for one judgement over another can rarely be found.

This observation serves to underline the fact that while we can speculate that L_2 learners start with a gestalt-like approach and eventually become more explicit regarding their judgements, we cannot deny that there will be some areas of language which defy a purely explicit or analytic analysis. In such cases L_2 learners must rely completely on their intuitive knowledge or their sprachgefühl. The degree to which a given individual's 'sprachgefühl' is developed may simply reflect, to a great extent, the L_2 learner's concern for sounding 'native-like,'

for demonstrating a strong empathy for the culture depending on whether or not he is integratively or instrumentally motivated. A more detailed discussion of the learner's characteristics and how they are integral to understanding sprachgefühl development will follow in a later chapter entitled The Learner. For the moment, we need to consider both the systematic and the ambiguous nature of language itself and how this may in some way affect the L_2 learner's choice of strategies during the acquisition process.

There are, in every language, certain immutable syntactic regulations which cannot be violated, such as word-order, reflexivization, adjective-noun agreement, etc., for which lingustic rules (in both the prescriptive and descriptive sense) are determined and must be applied. However, not all aspects of language use are rule-bound in this sense. They are not rule-bound to the extent that they cannot be subjected to a formal linguistic analysis in terms of major syntactic or phonological categories. Instead, there are certain verb tenses or lexical items which belong to the sociolinguistic realm in which correct usage (native-like usage) is dependent on semantic or pragmatic restrictions within the lexical item itself or within a particular context. Such contextually-linked linguistic phenomena are probably identifiable, to one extent or another, in all the languages of the world (Lakoff, 1972).

In French, for example, certain verb forms and personal pronouns are prescribed for specific contexts in which

register is crucial. The speaker must acquire an awareness of such nuances and learn to employ the appropriate language forms in order to avoid social blunders. Correct usage of honorifics in Asian languages, especially Japanese, demand an extremely sensitive awareness to the subtleties of the Japanese social hierarchy. As Lakoff (1972) points out, many languages require that there be overt expression of the identity of speaker and/or addressee, their respective social positions, ages, and sex. English speakers must also recognize these overtly in certain situations, but Japanese speakers need to pay much greater attention, more frequently.

Also, in language, there are numerous other idiosyncratic features and non-rule-bound items which the learner, native and L_2 alike, must commit to memory as part of his or her learned repertoire. This is particularly true of formulaic expressions, idioms and other set collocations (as noted by Bolinger, 1976), and also in the area of the lexicon in general, particularly in the case of derivational morphology. It is difficult, for example, to explain to a non-native speaker of English why we do not put "butter and bread" on the table, feel "sound and safe", do something "later or sooner" or explain that Marie cannot be "having a cold" but she can be "having a baby" or "having fun." In the latter case, we would be forced to discuss the semantic properties of the verb "to have" which restrict it from being used in the progressive to describe a state in this

particular situation. Such explanations (while they can sometimes be formulated as descriptive rules to some degree) go beyond the realm of a more direct or unconditional grammatical explanation in order to justify why the learner's utterance was not acceptable or appropriate, or simply not native-like. Nonetheless, very little explicit teaching is done with respect to vocabulary and register and using it 'appropriately.' Seldom are explicit statements made which would guide students to achieving stylistic appropriateness. Students usually receive little advice regarding which words, expressions, or structures are appropriate to a given register or level of usage or knowing that casual English speakers prefer dangling to fronted propositions in questions or relative clauses, or that contracted forms are avoided in formal writing but preferred elsewhere.

The fact that such explanations are almost entirely avoided in language-teaching texts is understandable. For until quite recently, contemporary linguists, no matter what their particular theoretical bias, have preferred to avoid the 'messy' areas of semantics and pragmatics. In moving away from simple distributional statements to explicit reference to meaning, intention, presupposition, or appropriateness conditions, the 'pedagogic' grammar has no option but to rely on informal intuitions and contextually-governed "rules" which are as yet largely unformulated, some of which always will be.

These aforementioned aspects of language use which appear not to be rule-bound, and thereby defy an explicit rule-type analysis in the formal linguistic sense, cannot be pin-pointed by either the native speaker, or the L_2 learner on a purely analytical level or formal rule-governed level. In fact, such language phenomena, which elicit an "It doesn't sound right," or "We don't say it that way" from the native speaker are being reacted to on a "by feel" or sprachgefühl basis, most likely because there are no "by rule" explanations and the speaker is forced to employ a more gestalt-type analysis. Others may argue that such errors are being reacted to on a "by feel" basis not necessarily because they are unanalyzable or not rule-governed, but simply because native speakers and non-natives who are extremely proficient may not be aware of such rules at the conscious level. While such an interpretation is perfectly plausible, the existence of certain aspects of language which are not rule-bound in the prescriptive or descriptive sense cannot be denied.

The sprachgefühl or correction function employed by both native speakers and language learners may invoke all sorts of language related knowledge, either linguistic, pragmatic, or communicative, as well as their knowledge of the world. Operating on this intuitive knowledge base not only entails having intuitions about grammaticality but also having opinions or attitudes about style or content of utterances, register, level of usage, perceptions of the

segmentation of words into sounds, and categorical or abstract knowledge concerning language -- its structure and its uses. The language learner relies on his/her communicative experience in the language, how often a certain word or expression has been heard or employed in an array of different contexts or social situations. When functioning in a second language, judgements and ideas regarding different usages are continuously being re-examined and re-evaluated. Such a process is an integral part of attaining native-like fluency. Nuances in a language, subject to changes in context, are primarily acquired by trial and error and frequency of occurrence in different communicative situations. Once a learner has acquired a highly developed sprachgefühl he/she is able to make generalizations about the target language which incorporate many language levels simultaneously: phonological level (pronunciation), form, meaning, and function. Gauging a second language learner's ability to make such kinds of judgements about a target language has recently become a major concern of second language acquisition researchers who have come to realize that when a second language learner's competence in the target language begins to approximate a native speaker's norm, his intuitions about the target language are indeed indicative of his development toward a native-like competency.

As pointed out earlier, there exist many aspects of a language which defy an explicit linguistic "rule"

explanation or which elude the realm of the traditional grammar. If we consider this issue in a more practical and applied light, curriculum developers and language teaching textbook writers remind us of the difficulties encountered when trying to write explicit formal rules for the realm of what some textbook writers call the 'fuzzy grammar.'

In his text, Modern English, concerning English as a second language, Rutherford (1975) comments on a notoriously difficult to learn rule of English, namely the use of articles. He claims that the best way to learn the correct use of articles is more through practice than close study of the rules and their many exceptions. While such a claim is not surprising, it instantiates the idea that there is a certain subset of items in any language which cannot possibly be taught in a totally formal manner. The language learner, either with or without the aid of a good teacher, must seek out the so-called "fuzzy areas" of the target language grammar and conquer them if he expects to develop a native-like command of the grammatically unpredictable aspects of the target language.

We may acknowledge then, the existence of the "fuzzy area" of the grammar which reputedly consists of complex constructions, false-cognates, formulaic expressions, idioms, lexical nuances in terms of social register, set collocations, etc.; all of which force semantic explanations out of the pedagogue concerning usage, sociolinguistic issues, pragmatics, etc., rather than straightforward

grammatical or syntactic explanations. While many linguists and language teachers have tried to determine the difference between those aspects of language which are clearly analyzable in terms of their syntactic and phonological properties from the more fuzzy aspects which demand a more sociolinguistic interpretation, no one has managed to draw a clear distinction between the two. It is not expected that the line between syntax and semantics is an easy one to draw, or that it is possible or should be possible in every case. There is, however, an undeniable difference between violating basic word-order such as: "I him saw", as compared with saying "tu" (informal second person pronoun in French) to your superior instead of the polite form "vous." Both mistakes are unacceptable, the first clearly violating the word-order used by most native English speakers, whereas the second mistake is acceptable grammatically, but not in this particular sociolinguistic situation.

To date, linguists, applied linguists and sociolinguists have managed to nibble at the periphery of the idea of two different sets of "rules" for these two different areas of language. Krashen (1977) attempted to present those differences in terms of what he views as "hard" and "easy" rules. According to Krashen, "hard" rules are those rules which resist definition in the formal linguistic sense and are more exemplary of generalizations in a language. He proposes that such generalizations must be learned perhaps tediously over a long period of time as one

eventually acquires a feeling for the nature or spirit of the language, thereby incrementing what is later discussed as 'implicit' knowledge. "Easy" rules, on the other hand, can be consciously learned and committed to memory. Krashen claims that these rules belong in the domain of a linguistic grammar and are limited in their explanations to a descriptive statement. The terms "hard" and "easy," unfortunately do not help to clarify the idea that there are two different areas of language which require two different "rule" approaches in language learning and teaching. We do not know whether Krashen's rules are "hard" or "easy" from the psycholinguistic perspective (learnability) or from the analytical linguistic perspective (formal analysis). He makes no conjectures regarding the complexity of learning which his "hard-easy" dichotomy seems to imply. If we consider his distinction in terms of complexity from the learner's standpoint, we may wonder why intuiting a "rule" through experience in the target language is any more difficult than consciously and formally learning a specific syntactic rule and remembering to apply it. Krashen's approach to the two different "rule" categories in language is ultimately more confounding than enlightening.

Aronson-Berman (1979) considers both these types of 'rules' in view of their function in what she calls a pedagogic (foreign or second language) grammar. She suggests that in a pedagogic target language grammar there are really two major sets of rules that the language learner must

contend with: Rules of Grammar and Rules of Thumb.

Rules of Grammar can be characterized as explicit generalizations in the form of verbal formulations about some aspect or feature of the target language dealing with either the use of a word or set of words, a given syntactic construction, a certain type of preposition, etc. Rules of Thumb, however, would take care of the 'fuzzy' realm, the semantic explanations provided by the teacher to clarify the deeper intuitive-sense which is true to the workings of the language itself.

She claims that language textbook rules are mainly concerned with how items (morphemes, words, phrases) are distributed, i.e., what they can or cannot co-occur with. It is only when the L_2 learner becomes sensitive to the finer subtleties and nuances in the lexicon, and the different social registers which fall into the "unteachable" category of the target language, that he can begin to use the language in a native-like way and thereby avoid sounding "off-key." As Lakoff (1972) notes, in order to predict the applicability of many rules one must be able to refer to assumptions about the social context of an utterance, as well as other implicit assumptions made by the participants in a discourse.

If one could teach second-language use successfully so that a non-native speaker could use the target language in a way reminiscent of a native speaker rather than a robot, then the situations which dictate a certain level of usage

or style in a given language would have to be identified. However, it is obviously useless to try to list or to pinpoint the superficial syntactic configurations where they are correctly used. The list would be almost infinite.

In spite of the odds, people do learn how to make these subtle distinctions, how to interpret and exploit the nuances of certain lexical items and expressions. Regarding L_2 learners, however, there is an obvious distinction between those L_2 learners who appear to reach a point in their L_2 development where they intuitively recognize these shifts in register and the constraints on stylistically appropriate usages. There are, of course, those who never do, regardless of the amount of formal instruction or immersion experience in the target language.

Such an achievement on the part of the L_2 learners who apparently develop a native-like sprachgefühl means they attained this sensitivity to a large degree without the aid of any explicit teaching. This, in turn, implies that the sprachgefühl learner may differ in specific ways from the average L_2 learner. Namely, he may be a different learner type due to certain personality traits and therefore he may employ certain strategies which are more conducive to acquiring a native-like competence in the target language.

For L_2 researchers, applied linguists, L_2 teachers, and psychologists who all share the common desire to better understand the L_2 acquisition process, there is a general consensus that in spite of the teaching method employed, the

motivating purpose or situational circumstances provide two reliable observations regarding L_2 acquisition which are consistently evident: (1) there are L_2 learners who are more successful than others in achieving a native-like competence in the target language regardless of similarity in their target language background; (2) within individual learners there are often great discrepancies in their mastery of the different aspects of language learning, whether it be aural comprehension, reading ability, or productive competence. Also, there are some learners, either by formal or informal instructional methods or both, who are extremely successful while others are not. It is obvious then, that we are dealing with a learner variable which requires more thorough and systematic investigation.

Such a viewpoint has inspired second language acquisition researchers to address the issue empirically, borrowing a methodological technique from L_1 research; namely having L_2 learners make either judgements about deviant or inappropriate utterances in the target language or to detect, locate, and correct errors in the target language on error detection tasks. These judgements may concern grammaticality, acceptability, ambiguity, synonymy, meaningfulness and comprehensibilty, etc. All such tasks undeniably involve checking out the L_2 learner's "language feel." If it is true that the findings from such judgement tasks do provide consistent information and adequate descriptions of a learner's particular stage of L_2

development, then an examination of the L_2 learner's production errors, and his intuitions regarding the nature of these errors, should lead us one step closer to discovering what strategies the learner may be using in his attempts to acquire a native-like proficiency in the target language. Tasks requiring judgements of grammaticality or appropriateness of an utterance or the ability to detect and correct in the target language are known as metalinguistic tasks and constitute the area known as metalinguistic studies.

The Development of Studies in Metalinguistic Awareness

Before presenting a discussion of the development of metalinguistic studies, it is necessary to understand exactly what is meant by the term 'metalinguistic awareness' and the ability to perform metalinguistically. Authors have varied somewhat in the definition of metalinguistic awareness and their use of this term but there appears to be some general agreement as to its meaning. Being 'metalinguistically aware' implies the ability to go beyond linguistic performance at a higher level in one's self and others. It implies the ability to look at and to manipulate language as an object. More precisely, metalinguistic judgements could include not only statements about intuitions of grammaticality but opinions or attitudes about the style or context of utterances, perceptions of the segmentation of words into sounds, categorical or abstract

knowledge about language, its structure and its uses. These statements are metalinguistic in the sense that they treat language as an object.

To date, the metalinguistic studies have developed methodologically very similarly to the L_1 acquisition studies involving judgements, or location and correction of errors. L_2 researchers, however, have been forced to become very innovative given that there are no standardized methods or techniques for eliciting judgements. They are undeniably faced with much greater intersubject variability given the L_2 learners' original orientations, their ages, cognitive skills, whether or not they are field dependent or field independent, or integratively or instrumentally motivated.

In the most recent research literature, judgements of grammaticality and acceptability have received the greatest attention from L_2 researchers. If the role of the native speaker's intuitive judgements has gained acceptance in theoretical linguistics, then it seems logical to many L_2 researchers that the intuitive judgements of L_2 learners should also receive some attention. Corder (1973) feels it is 'normal' that L_2 learners would be very good informants regarding their developing language system (their 'interlanguage'). He also asserted that the judgements of grammaticality would closely and reliably approximate those of the native speaker. Before pursuing these claims, a brief recapitulation of the metalinguistic research to date and the purpose of such judgements and their implications for L_2

research will be discussed.

Just over a decade ago, when the term 'metalinguistic awareness' was first being coined, researchers interested in testing the metalinguistic ability of native speakers first looked at children in the process of acquiring their first language. Most of these studies were concerned with determining when children were able to make various kinds of judgements regarding their developing language system and were mainly discussed in terms of grammaticality judgements. Gleitman, Gleitman, and Shipley (1972) found that quite young children (2.5+ years) can detect and alter grammaticality, although not 100% of the time. They also discovered that for older children (5 to 8 years) semantic anomaly was the most important criterion used for judging acceptability.

Hakes (1980) also took a developmental approach to his experiment in which he used several measures and a variety of items, trying to correlate the children's progress with their cognitive development. He found that the youngest children (4-5 years) were not able to explain their acceptability ratings and preferred to give content explanations for syntactic judgements. The 8 year-olds, on the other hand, passed a 90% level for judgements of presumed deviant sentences. Hakes concluded that there was significant 'metalinguistic' improvement with age and that the children's skills appeared to correlate with their entry into the Piagetian concrete-operational stage of cognitive

development.

The findings of these studies appear to be representative of the majority of the research findings in this area. But when a large sample of studies is considered, they are for the most part, difficult to compare as such a variety of observational, interactive, elicitational, and statistical techniques have been employed. Consequently, the findings in the L_2 metalinguistic research literature suffer from the same inherent problems. In reaction to this, L_2 methodologies have tried to be more innovative despite the lack of standard methods and greater intersubject variability. In most error-analysis based studies, the learner's proficiency is reflected in the language they produce; the researcher's astuteness in the judgements they make. But learners can also make judgements, evaluating the acceptability of a target language corpus and correcting what they perceive as errors in the corpus. Not unlike the L_1 studies, the main focus of L_2 studies has been on so-called judgements of grammaticality, but they have also focused on the location of errors in test items. The standards of correctness have tended to be the experimenter's own judgements, but the degree of abnormality in the sentences has usually been limited to plausible or slightly difficult L_2 grammar points. A representative sample of such studies should be considered.

Cohen and Robbins (1976) required learners to evaluate their own written errors and to locate and correct them if

possible. The performance by the students revealed a diversity of grammatical awareness even among three subjects.

White (1977) presented adult L_2 learners with a written version of their own oral errors and analyzed their judgements according to a relatively superficial error-analysis (EA) classification. No differences in success of judgement for error type (interference or development) were found, nor any differences in success according to the level of the learner. Of the total number of errors, only 47% were corrected; another 10% were located but not corrected. White concluded that time allotted for the task was a crucial variable, i.e., the additional time available when learners are allowed to inspect their oral production promotes better access to explicit or implicit rules.

Lightbown and Barkman (1978) had younger French learners of English judge "correctness" of various "-s" grammar points (plurals, possessives, 3rd person singular) known to be problems for French students learning English. They were interested in whether or not subjects would improve in judgement (and ability to correct errors) following a period of instruction on these points. Learners with the instruction showed a percentage improvement four times greater than for control groups with no instruction.

Gass (1983), like White (1977), presented subjects with their own and with others' written errors, requiring

grammaticality judgements, location, and correction of errors. The errors were recognized with 70% accuracy. Again, time seems to be crucial. Gass claims that, with more time, students paid greater attention to form. There was a developmental trend as well; the more advanced learners were better able to judge and rectify other learners' errors than were the intermediate level learners.

Two studies by Schachter, Tyson, and Diffley (1976) and Tucker and Sarofim (1979), used judgements of acceptability to compare the reactions of non-native speakers from different first language groups to the same set of target language errors, and to compare those responses with the responses of native speakers. Neither of these studies, however, considers developmental changes in L_2 learners' judgements of target language errors.

d'Anglejan-Chatillon (1975) noted one sort of developmental change in learners' judgements. In contrasting students at two proficiency levels, she notes that only the more advanced students produced nonrandom judgements of the deviance of test sentences. Her conclusion was that less advanced students were not able to discriminate between normal and deviant sentences, thus revealing that a comparison of judgements made by learners at different stages in their mastery of a second language can reveal changes in developing competence.

Moreover, such a comparison provides a view of some areas of transitional competence that, in a typical error

analysis, are obscured by avoidance strategies. Kleinman (1978) presented results using Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, and American students which support Schachter's (1974) view that students who have a lot of trouble with certain structures will simply avoid using them. Kleinman suggests that it is not so much the question that L_1 influence pertains to the avoidance of certain structures by L_2 learners but that personality factors, such as anxiety, confidence, and willingness to take risks, provide information on which students are likely to avoid various structures.

Madden, Bailey, Eisenstein, and Anderson (1973), in a detailed investigation of four auxiliaries in 46 adult ESL students, distinguish "avoiders" from "guessers." Avoiders would not respond to items they did not know well and were willing to imitate a sentence only when they felt the likelihood of making errors was small. Guessers were willing to try even when there was little likelihood of being correct.

Bialystok and Frölich (1978) administered an Aural Grammar test to French students. Deviant and correct French sentences were judged both for grammaticality and for error category by given types. They tested this measure against subjects' scores on standard tests and found correlations. It was found that subjects' confidence in their judgements correlated positively with the correctness of judgement. They interpreted such results as indications that these

learners shared a more conscious mastery of rules. This does not imply, however, that the subjects' knowledge was more explicitly based as they had earlier postulated. In fact, in a follow-up study by Bialystok (1979), the results appear to indicate that subjects' correct judgements are based on implicit (unanalysed) knowledge unless there is a "focus on form" and enough time allowed to access explicit information.

In order to test Corder's (1973) hypothesis (that advanced L_2 learner's grammaticality judgements would eventually approximate those of a native speaker), Arthur (1980) had 149 ESL learners locate and correct 'typical' L_2 type errors in a written passage. His was the first study to provide such a complete context for judgement. In partial agreement with one of Gass' (1983) findings, he found that the less advanced learners were more likely to make erroneous corrections of correct forms and more advanced learners were better able to locate errors, although the latter were no better at correcting them. These findings did not exactly confirm his original predictions or Corder's hypothesis. Arthur also assumed that learner judgments of acceptability are in part a reflection of that learner's competence in the target language, i.e., if a sequence is judged to be acceptable it is because such a sequence is in accord with their internalized knowledge of the target language structure.

Their assumptions are in fact fundamental to the rationale behind any type of metalinguistic study, be it concerned with grammaticality or appropriateness judgements, or error detection and correction. Up to this point, metalinguistic studies have, for the most part, produced inconclusive results. The majority of the studies have involved L_2 learners at different levels of proficiency engaging in 'high-monitoring' type tasks. These tasks require the L_2 learner to concentrate on the form of the language versus the communicative intent of the message being conveyed. As reported, the students are usually asked to evaluate or edit their own oral and/or written errors or texts written in a kind of 'interlanguage' (addressed on page 28) and to make judgements or to locate and correct errors if possible.

Researchers who have primarily concentrated on looking at adult L_2 learners have discovered, as one would expect, that learners at different levels of proficiency do exhibit a very revealing diversity of metalinguistic awareness or ability to make these kinds of judgements. Despite the results of some problematic studies, in general, it seems that advanced L_2 learners are better both at locating and correcting errors than are intermediate and beginning learners, therefore implying that their ability to successfully operate on these deviant items is closer to a native-speaker norm. Also of major concern to many L_2 acquisition researchers is whether or not an enhanced

metalinguistic awareness (an apparently explicit knowledge about language as an objective entity) reflects the learner's knowledge of explicit rules, i.e., actually being able to articulate a formal linguistic rule for a given problem.

A recent error detection study by Gass (1983), dealing with this particular question, revealed that while an advanced L_2 learner may be able to pinpoint a specific problem, it cannot be assumed that he/she can articulate a rule. This is in keeping with the behaviour of native speakers in their respective languages. As native speakers we most likely cannot give explicit rules for why we say one thing and not another unless we have been formally trained as linguists or language teachers.

In a study by Krashen and Fathman (1976) which looked at formal versus informal learners (formal learners being people who have a large repertoire of explicit rule knowledge at their disposal as opposed to informal learners who tend to operate more on intuition or heuristics), it was discovered that there was very little performance difference on a particular test so that mere conscious knowledge of rules does not ensure that they will be applied when L_2 learners are requested to either produce utterances or to correct them.

These findings were not surprising. Learners have been observed to make many self-described 'careless' errors which they were able to correct themselves, increasing their

overall accuracy by 6% in some studies and up to 47% in others (Dulay et al., 1982). The corrections were typically made for lower-level morphological rules.

Researchers have also found that learners are commonly able to produce fairly high-level constructions without being able to state any kind of relevant rule at all. In light of this research it has been strongly suggested that the ability to produce many of the complex sentences and constructions of the language appears to be the result of what have been called subconscious (unanalyzed) processes rather than conscious (analyzed) ones. This issue is readdressed in the chapter entitled The Learner. Before turning our attention to the L_2 learner in greater detail, a more in-depth look at the rationale and the employment of different types of metalinguistic awareness tasks is necessary. From the research studies previously reported, it is obvious that tasks involving error detection and correction are undoubtedly popular testing devices.

The past decade of second language acquisition research has given birth to many new experimental techniques and methodologies, all designed to discover those fundamental factors of the language learning process, to try to isolate linguistic primes of human cognitive activity. Initially, second language acquisition researchers were more interested in developing new and improved methods of teaching than in conducting empirical investigations on second language learning as such. As a result, the actual methodologies in

second language experimentation have evolved somewhat slowly and, at times haphazardly. Research on language use and first and second language acquisition has increasingly tended to utilize methodologies from psychology and the social sciences to substantiate theoretical positions and anecdotal accounts with objectively reliable and valid information. While a comprehensive and critical discussion of the second language research methodology is beyond the scope of this thesis, an attempt is made to provide some idea of the problems involved in metalinguistic studies, especially those involving error detection and correction.

Since the focus of second language research has shifted towards the learner, an entire array of psychological and sociolinguistic factors have emerged for closer scrutiny. The psychological make-up of the learner himself, as well as the utterances, he produces constitute a major portion of the variables considered in the research methodology and analysis. The inclusion of these variables has provoked more interest in the language aptitude of the learner, his age, his personality type, and language background. This has forced teachers and researchers alike to look more closely at the kind of language a second language learner produces in spontaneous, natural speech, namely the <u>errors</u> which he produces.

Errors and Interlanguage

A little over a decade ago, Selinker introduced the term 'interlanguage' to the second language research literature. For Selinker, 'interlanguage' is the language learner's language, a sort of hybrid language between his first language and his target language, i.e., a mixed or intermediate language. His justification for this notion was that a large number of errors could be ascribed to the process of transfer. However, subsequent research on language data produced by both adults and children has revealed that the proportion of transfer errors is actually fairly insignificant. In actuality, many errors seemed to be similar in most learners at the same stage of development and were largely independent of the nature of the mother tongue (Dulay et al., 1982). Corder's (1981) concept of interlanguage is not compatible with Selinker's notion of a "hybrid" language but has a developmental history of its own. The 'interlanguage system' is a dynamic one. The learner passes through a theoretically infinite number of states of grammar along a continuum starting with the native language, ultimately approaching the target language. Corder views the language learner's progress along such a continuum to be a representative gauge of his transitional competence. In choosing this term, Corder borrows the notion of 'competence' from Chomsky and emphasizes that the learner possesses a certain body of knowledge which is presumably constantly developing, which underlies the utterances he

makes. How one can empirically investigate such a dynamic, transitional system is a problem which remains to be solved. Until we have overcome the theoretical and methodological problems of describing the approximative systems, or idiosyncratic grammars of individual learners, we are in no position to make firm generalizations about the phenomenon of interlanguage and its relative import. Since interlanguage is such a broad or diffuse notion it eludes any status as a quantifiable entity in empirical investigation.

Some Pros and Cons of Error Analysis

Previously, errors in second language production, especially those which were evidently transfer errors from the first language (errors that reflected the structure of L_1), were considered as unwanted utterances to be eradicated as soon as possible because they were blatant indicators of the language learner's incompetency with the target language. However, if we make the distinction between errors which are the offspring of chance circumstances (such as the 'slips of the tongue' which even native speakers sometimes make) and those errors which reveal the learner's current underlying knowledge of the target language, as Corder would suggest, then the status of errors has been elevated from the category of unwanted forms to the "indicators of the hypotheses" that a learner may be testing about the target language. In this sense then, errors provide evidence of the

knowledge of the system of the language that a second language learner is learning and using at a particular period in his development. It has been proposed that a closer look at the errors in a learner's interlanguage may provide the teacher or the linguist with clues as to how far toward the goal the learner has progressed and what remains to be learned. The second language acquisition researcher may gain insight into how the language is learned and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language.

One should not regard errors of interference then, as the persistance of old habits, but as signs that the learner is coping with the system of the new language. It has generally been assumed that the effect of interference errors has been inhibitory rather than facilitative. In this light it has been suggested that if errors are systematically studied, they will tell us something about the learner's built-in syllabus.

Originally, the only approach to error analysis was an offspring of the behaviourist viewpoint known as Contrastive Analysis (CA). Proponents of this approach believed that since learning is basically a process of forming automatic habits, errors should therefore result from first language habits interfering with the learner's attempts to learn new linguistic behaviours. This idea held sway over the field of applied linguistics and second language teaching for over two decades. The basic notion behind CA was that if

linguists could analyze carefully and completely the systems of both the first and second languages, the errors in second language learning would occur at those points at which the two languages were dissimilar. The solution was a systematic analysis of both languages followed by the prescription of pattern drills to overcome first language habits. More precisely, Contrastivists claimed that on the basis of a comparison of the descriptions of the phonologies, grammars, and lexicons of the languages in question, Contrastive linguistics offers hypotheses concerning identifications a learner will make between elements of his native language system and the target language system, thus providing predictions and explanations concerning his learning behaviour.

Subsequent investigation, however, on the part of applied linguists and teachers has revealed that a student's first language could not consistently be inferred from the errors made in various types of tests. CA has also received little empirical confirmation in the area of grammar, including second language syntax and morphology. Research indicated that the incidence of errors traceable to the first language is low, only 4% to 12% for children and 8% to 23% in adults (Dulay, et al., 1982, p. 102).

Another type of study which attempted to explore the role of the first language in second language acquisition focuses on judgements of grammatical correctness. The basic underlying question is "Will judgements of grammatical

correctness be affected by the differences between one's first language and one's second language?" If so, one could detect similar patterns of responses for students from the same language backgrounds. Investigators discovered that a student's first language could not be inferred from the errors made in grammaticality judgements. Where judgements of grammaticality are concerned, factors other than the structures and rules of the first language seem to be operating.

At the level of performance then, Contrastive Analysis emerges as a poor predictor of learner performance. Theoretically, Contrastive Analysis has also emerged as a weak contender in contributing to any significant illumination in the field of second language acquisition research. Nonetheless, it is difficult to deny that, in the initial stages of second language acquisition, a high degree of first language interference seems to be quite obvious. Perhaps it is most noticeable in the phonological domain. The usually accented speech of adult second language learners appears to give an overall impression of interference. This does not imply in any way, however, that interference is self-evident in all language areas. Further research on this issue has revealed that the development of the L_2 phonological system may be independent of the development of the lexicon and grammar (Dulay et al., 1982).

Since Contrastive Analysis was not satisfying the research needs of applied linguists or second language

teachers, the desire to account for the source of learners' errors lost some of its momentum until S. Pit Corder's arguments for the significance of learners' errors appeared in the International Review of Applied Linguistics in 1967. Corder's concept of L_2 errors as being representative of learners' systematic attempts to deal with language data held instant and widespread appeal for those seeking an alternative to the somewhat restrictive behaviourist based CA approach. Since subsequent research revealed that most errors produced by L_2 learners were actually developmental and not interlingual, the 'new look' at errors, simply known as Error Analysis (EA), helped to further the developmental-creative aspects of language acquisition research, more closely following the psycholinguistic search for an alternative to the behaviourist's habit formation theory of language acquisition.

Error Analysis proponents claimed that they must attempt to account for learners' errors that could not be explained or predicted by CA or behaviourist theory. They believed also that a careful study of a large corpus of errors committed by L_2 learners while speaking the target language provides factual empirical data rather than theoretical speculation for developing a syllabus or a model of L_2 acquisition. Viewing errors in this light promulgated the notion that such errors provide evidence for a much more complex view of the learning process -- one in which the learner is seen as an active participant in the formation

1982).

Also, for the most part, L_2 errors have been analyzed in isolation from a context. The errors are extracted from the corpus and the corpus is abandoned. This is an unfortunate move since errors have their external and internal sources in the communicative environment and within the learner himself. By removing the error from a context, information with respect to the condition that produced the error is lost, rendering it impossible to ascribe a possible motivation for the error. Also, by abandoning the corpus, the learner's non-errors are lost so we lose important data regarding what the learner really knows as opposed to only what he does not know. It is often the case that a postulated "explanation" for a given error can be contradicted by evidence of correct performance on related or similar items.

Given the limitations of analyzing errors in such an isolated fashion in optional contexts, it appears more logical to analyze errors in obligatory contexts in which the number of words or sentences are considered, allowing the researcher to arrive at a percentage of accuracy. In this way, the researcher is supplied with the total number of required occurrances of any element or structure in a given corpus. This total is then used as a basis for comparison with the numbers of instances where the element of structure actually occurs. Obligatory contexts also ensure to some extent that learners cannot employ avoidance

and revision of hypotheses.

Upon closer examination of the research literature, however, it is obvious that Error Analysis has fallen short of all these claims, especially the one of explaining the nature of the second language acquisition process. By simply providing a rather superficial taxonomy of different types of errors, namely intralingual and developmental, the EA researchers have confused a description of errors with error explanation, thereby confusing the language product with the language process. The level of the description of errors has not only been insufficiently deep, but also unsystematic. Errors are classified as errors of omission or addition, at the graphological, grammatical, and lexico-semantic levels. The lack of distinction between the different 'levels' or categories of errors has caused a tremendous amount of confusion in the research literature.

From the EA literature one derives a sense of stagnation in terms of theory formulation. It fails to account for the appearance of a variety of error types in L_2 learner speech and writing. Not only has it failed to make the product versus process distinction, but the taxonomy developed thus far to delineate sources of error is lacking in precision and specificity on defining error categories. Categories such as 'intralingual' and 'developmental' have turned out to be often indistinguishable subsets of each other. A learner's developing language reveals that most developing errors are in fact intralingual (Dulay et al.,

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strategies; learners avoid producing constructions which they find difficult both in terms of the actual formation of such structures and the conditions for their use. Also, errors that hinder communication exhibit certain characteristics that are distinguished from those whose effects on communication are negligible; they affect those parts of grammar that refer to overall sentence organization, such as word order and connectors.

While it is clear that the descriptive classification of errors is often the first step a researcher takes in developing a hypothesis or inference about second language learning processes, enormous problems have been caused because the idiosyncratic definition of errors and error types has prevented meaningful cross-study comparisons or validation of results. With respect to determining whether or not an error has been made, it has been pointed out (cf. Strevens, 1969; Ross, 1979) that it is possible for two native speakers to differ, in a surprisingly large proportion of cases, as to whether items are acceptable or unacceptable, and hence as to whether they should be counted as errors. Consequently, the degree of prescriptiveness of the individual analyst greatly affects the number of errors to be categorized.

Despite the obvious conceptual weaknesses of EA and its pragmatic limitations, studying the errors made by second language learners needs little justification. It is simply the manner in which we choose to study and to analyze them

which is crucial. What is needed then, is to develop better techniques for the identification and description of errors. While the satisfactory explanation of errors is dependent to a great degree upon an adequate description of errors, this will be possible only if a systematic and thorough taxonomy of errors can be accomplished first. Only at that point would we be one step closer to identifying the psycholinguistic processes of language learning and moving closer to drawing certain conclusions about the strategies adopted by the L_2 learner in the process of learning. To the extent that language learning is an interaction between internal and external factors, explanations of errors will have to be multidimensional and include factors beyond the observable characteristics of the errors, namely the characteristics of the learner himself and his communicative environment.

We have seen then, that both CA and EA have been instrumental in trying to pinpoint 'difficulties' in second language learning. The results of these analyses have attracted the attention of linguists, psychologists, teachers, and curriculum developers. Errors have gained some credibility as indicators of learning and guides to teaching. However, the explanation of errors, the ultimate goal of L_2 researchers, is not a simple matter of assigning a single source to each error that occurs. Whether we use CA or EA we are still discovering very little about the learning mechanisms employed by the learner. The processes

which actually take place inside the learner's mind are still a mystery.

In reaction to the relative 'failings' of CA and EA, recent views on learning processes and learners' errors stress more and more that it is imperative to take the learner into consideration if we are to find more satisfactory solutions to the problem, namely, what takes place inside the learner himself. We need to find more satisfactory solutions to the problem of predicting and explaining the L_2 learner's behaviour.

In general, it appears that 'interlanguage' background information and error explanations could provide useful insights concerning what strategies L_2 learners might employ and, subsequently, why. Whereas the gathering of sociolinguistic data concerning a learner's background may not be a new undertaking, probing the strategies the second language learner uses is, in fact, relatively recent (Rubin, 1975). Such information could be most helpful in the interpretation of learners' patterns. This suggestion is based on the assumption that the learner himself has some insight into his own learning problems and that he is capable of judging the relative degree of difficulty of the second language materials with a certain degree of proficiency.

The Role of L_1 and L_2 Intuitions

A review of the relevant literature reveals that, quite disappointingly, there is only a very small number of studies which investigate the psycholinguistic variables underlying difficulties in learning a second language, and no complete study as yet reported that is devoted to grammatical difficulties. L_2 researchers are, of course, interested in characterizing learner knowledge, not simply production, but both the actual performance of the learners and their intuitions concerning the target language must be considered if we expect to procure a more complete picture. Corder (1972) argues cogently that if researchers are to provide descriptively adequate accounts of the learner's interlanguage, these accounts must be in accordance with the learner's grammatical intuitions about his interlanguage. No characterization of the learner's interlanguage based solely on collecting and organizing the utterances produced by the learner will be descriptively adequate.

Defining the learner's intuitions as grammatical, however, tends to limit the framework in which intuitions can be employed. When native speakers and non-native speakers alike make use of their 'grammatical intuitions' to determine whether some linguistic expression is grammatical or acceptable, they are being asked to consider many things which extend beyond the specifically grammatical domain. Too often, linguists confuse the descriptive notion of well-formedness with the prescriptive notion of correctness

when asking subjects for grammaticality or acceptability judgements. A native speaker or non-native speaker cannot always give clear grammatical judgements since the foundations for such judgements do not always fall into neatly separated categories such as syntactic or semantic. We may make an intuitive judgement that some linguistic expression is odd or deviant but we cannot, in general, know whether this deviance is a matter of syntax, semantics, pragmatics, belief, memory limitations, style, etc., or even whether there <u>are</u> appropriate categories for the interpretation of the judgement in question.

In both L_1 and L_2 acquisition research findings, in which speakers have been requested to use their intuitions, the nature of the task has often been so vaguely defined that the speaker may not understand whether or not he is making intuitive judgements regarding the prescriptive acceptability of a sentence (a grammaticality judgement) or simply a judgement regarding the semantic acceptability (an acceptability judgement). This crucial distinction seems to have been lost in much of the literature and consequently speakers may have been using different kinds of intuitions for the same task within a particular study.

During the past two decades, linguists in the tradition of generative grammar have made systematic use of their own 'intuitions' as sources of data for understanding language organization. In the past, however, using intuitions as a basis for providing us with information about language has

received a great deal of often well-deserved bad press. Aside from the confusion regarding the grammaticality versus acceptability judgements, critics have argued that intuitions are too subjective and are therefore too variable (Spencer, 1973). They argue too that the mental basis of linguistic intuitions is obscure regarding their relationship to other aspects of language behaviour, such as speaking and listening, and to an hypothesized structure such as 'grammar' (Carroll et al., 1981).

Nonetheless, linguists and psycholinguists have persisted in using native speaker intuitions to collect some of the most directly available facts about sentences. For this reason, theories of language are usually first tested on intuitions about sentences collected from native speaker/hearers of a language. Most language acquisition researchers agree that the elicitation of intuitional data is revealing and must be pursued. The 'intuitive' judgements elicited from native speakers are usually restricted to a few topics: grammaticality, ambiguity, relatedness of sentences in form and meaning, or intuitions concerning the lexical or social appropriateness of an utterance.

There have been many investigations into the ability of humans to give judgements about language. These findings have been compared against individuals' abilities to use language in conversational exchange. Differences in people's abilities to perform these two kinds of feats have been noted and classified as differences related to the ages and

capacities of the subjects and differences concerning the structure of the tasks they are required to perform. It always turns out that giving language judgements, retreiving and making use of one's intuitions, is relatively hard compared to talking and understanding. To give a language judgement then, one must take a prior cognitive process (linguistic performance) as the object of a yet higher order cognitive process (reflection about language peformance or what can be called a 'metalinguistic performance').

While arguments against using native speakers' metalinguistic judgements or intuitions are clear, especially in light of the prior research in the error analysis field, none of these techniques has had a more varied and potentially significant application than that of the elicitation of metalinguistic judgements about language structure and use. As just discussed, the practice of using intuitive judgements has nonetheless led many linguists and psycholinguists to protest the limitations inherent in the use of possibly idiosyncratic intuitions. A review of the literature in which the pros and cons of metalinguistic judgements is hotly debated reveals that, currently, the controversy has subsided and simply a more conservative approach is being advocated.

The general point which emerges is that such linguistic judgements must be employed cautiously as they are complex behavioural phenomena, subject to variations of their own from as yet unknown sources; and as a result they may not be

as good indicators of linguistic structure as the (also variable) everyday communicative performance of native speakers (Chaudron, 1983). In spite of all the misgivings about metalinguistic judgements, researchers have not hesitated to employ "metalinguistic" judgements as confirmatory data for their various theories of language performance and acquisition. The underlying and most basic assumption that must be accepted then, is that native language speakers can make accurate judgements of relative difficulty, complexity/simplicity, correctness, and appropriateness of utterances.

Methodological Problems

Again, the wide variety of methodologies in use must be considered. In many cases the reporting of results or data was insufficient, and within the design of the experiment there appeared to be a lack of adequate control over many variables such as training in the task, age, language background, etc. Often the kinds of stimulus materials used were not clearly explained or they were poorly elaborated. The types of statistical analyses conducted were either never discussed or non-existent.

Secondly, all different types of judgement tasks have been employed: grammaticality, acceptability, meaningfulness, appropriateness, correctness, etc., and very limited consideration has been given to the distinctive nature of each of these tasks, and the different domains of

criteria involved. Generally, results revealed high between-subject variation and subjects' justifications for judgements were sometimes based on seemingly irrelevant but understandable reasoning (Chaudron, 1983).

In spite of all this, there is reasonably clear evidence that as learners develop toward a native-like proficiency, their ability to match the experimenter's "objective" norms improve. Bialystok (1979), Arthur(1980), and Gass(1983) all note this growth in comparisons among L_2 learners. While metalinguistic judgement tasks and error-detection tests often reveal individual idiosyncratic and sometimes conflicting findings, thereby limiting the previous claim to some extent, none of them raises any counter-examples of poorer performance on the part of more advanced learners. Perhaps one of the most striking constraints of these studies is that researchers have usually been concerned with the subject's awareness of limited and somewhat superficial syntactic errors and structures, while virtually assuming that subjects are not capable of judging more semantically-weighted nuances in the native-speaker normative sense.

Also, it should not be overlooked that the binary presentation (implicit/explicit) of the linguistic knowledge base has been consistently pursued throughout the L_2 literature, and this, in turn, has perpetuated an overly simplistic notion of the language learning process. First of all, there is no reason to assume that these two knowledge

bases are independent of one another. Natural language input, in all its complexity, does not naturally trigger a focus on form. Empirical evidence indicates that native speakers and non-native speakers rarely concentrate on syntax unless instructed to do so. This does not imply that speakers disregard syntax entirely. Language users must attend to all aspects of the input simultaneously, shifting their focus of attention as determined by the communicative situation. It seems eminently reasonable that linguistic processing involves both the active accessing of the two linguistic knowledge bases, implicit and explicit, in greater or lesser proportions.

Taking such a perspective, however, would necessitate viewing the language along a continuum, versus the predominant view of two independently functioning systems. Sinclair, Jarvella, and Levelt (1978) have also suggested, for instance, that there is a "scale of explicitness" ranging from self-correction of errors (implicit) through explicit reflections on performance, to actual formulation of relevant rules.

To date, the L_2 research investigating the L_2 learner's linguistic knowledge has been to some extent based on faulty assumptions. The restricted approach in designing linguistic manipulation tasks is possibly, in part, a consequence of the influence of the Monitor Theory (discussed in Chapter III). Investigators have been overly concerned with tasks which require a 'focus on form' at the 'explicit

rule-governed' level. As pointed out, L_2 learners have usually been requested to perform 'metalinguistically' on series of unrelated sentences and to make judgements regarding the more superficial aspects of target language utterances. Very few of the metalinguistic tasks have appealed to the L_2 learner's more intuitive knowledge, i.e., the kind of knowledge underlying native-like competency. More recently, however, the focus of metalinguistic tasks has shifted from an almost exclusive preoccupation with the language product to a greater concentration on the learner and his/her particular personality and cognitive style. It is hoped that through a careful analysis of learner characteristics, some insight will be gained into the possible strategies employed by an L_2 learner when performing metalinguistically.

CHAPTER II

THE LEARNER

> A person who appears hopeless at languages is not necessarily lacking in the appropriate intellectual ability; it may be a personality trait that inhibits him: he may be resisting what seems to him an encroachment on his personality.
>
> (Lambert, 1963)

When psychologists talk about the relationship between personality and cognition, they claim that personality affects cognition and vice versa. Personality affects cognition in the sense that there are certain personality traits (general, distinct, and enduring individual differences) which affect people's ideas about themselves and the world around them. Just as any behaviour may be potentially subsumed under some personality trait, so may cognition (Scott, Osgood, & Peterson, 1979, p. 30). If we agree that personality is inseparably related to intelligence and cognitive style, it is to be expected that personality will exert an important influence on a person's aptitude, interests, and goals regarding L_2 learning. The potential effects of personality characteristics such as empathy, attitude, aptitude, sociability, anxiety, and self-concept have been examined and re-examined since L_2 researchers have turned their attention to the learner and the learning processes as opposed to the former preoccupation with the language itself.

Given our scanty knowledge regarding the extra-linguistic phenomena which influence first and second

language learning, it is not evident what precise effects a learner's individual characteristics will have on his approach to language learning and his subsequent success or failure. The lack of empirical evidence in this area reflects the problems inherent in dealing with affective or social variables as well as the poorly defined "state of the art" within psychology with respect to the determination of the critical dimension of personality itself.

Although the effects of affective-social variables are easily apprehended at the intuitive level, L_2 researchers have not been terribly successful in designing sound methodological techniques for accurately assessing these kinds of phenomena. This problem is quite separate from trying to measure their effects on language acquisition. The methodological problems involved in measuring affective-social variables contributes to the scepticism which abounds among empirical investigators in the L_2 research field. Even if such variables could be adequately measured, the problem of determining how these variables, separately and collectively, affect the language learning process still remains to be investigated. In spite of the fears of dealing with such an apparently intractable area, many researchers have persisted in developing tests which purport to measure the personality characteristics mentioned above, resulting in what they believe to be some successful attempts at correlating these characteristics with L_2 performance on a variety of linguistic manipulation tasks.

As discussed in the preceding section, many L_2 learners will differ in their attempts to achieve a complete competence in the target language regardless of similarity in their former instruction and experience with the language. There are, of course, L_2 learners who do not strive for a native-like fluency in the target language and consequently do not attain it. This fact has inspired L_2 researchers to try to determine the 'ingredients' of the 'good language learner,' giving rise to closer scrutiny of personality and cognitive styles.

First of all, it is important to establish precisely what is meant by native-like proficiency. Naiman, Frölich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) have described it in terms of four characteristics:

(1) the intuitive mastery of the forms of a language;
(2) the intuitive mastery of the linguistic, cognitive, affective, and sociocultural meanings expressed by the language forms;
(3) the capacity to use the language with the maximum attention to meaning and minimum attention to form;
(4) creativity of language use.

While these four characteristics appear to capture the basic tenets of native-like proficiency, it is clear from the L_2 research literature (discussed in the preceding chapter) that the present testing methodologies are inadequate to test language proficiency on all these levels. The greater portion of linguistic manipulation tasks deal exclusively

with tapping the learner's 'learned' or rule-governed knowledge regarding the target language. In error detection tasks in which students are requested to locate and correct errors, the errors are usually superficial syntactic problems which require the learner to focus on the form of the language and not the message, thereby tapping his explicit rule-governed, grammatical knowledge as opposed to a more implicit, automated, or intuitively based knowledge.

It seems logical to assume that if we want to examine the native-like learner, we must present the learner with tasks which will also tap his more intuitive knowledge. Achieving a native-like proficiency is contingent upon developing an intuitive grasp of the affective and sociocultural meanings of language forms. When Acton (1979) attempted to explain why certain learners were able to perceive these kinds of connotations in a target language, he attributed this ability to the characteristic of <u>empathy</u>. He claimed that an empathic language learner, i.e., a person who has the capacity for participation in another's feelings or ideas, will have an advantage in at least two ways:

(1) an empathic person will be better at picking up the nuances of word use as he/she is able to "put himself inside another's head";

(2) he/she has more potential for more accurate pronunciation and, since connotation for words is best picked up in conversation, in face-to-face interaction, an empathic person finds it easier to engage in more

meaningful, more sophisticated conversation, thereby enhancing learning of connotative meanings.

While these suppositions are not unreasonable, they remain suppositions since their implications are extremely difficult to quantify.

Hogan (1969) designed an Empathy Scale to discriminate between high and low empathic individuals. According to Hogan, an empathic individual would have the following characteristics:

(1) be socially perceptive of a wide range of interpersonal cues;
(2) be aware of the impressions he makes on others;
(3) be skilled in social techniques of imaginative play, pretending, and humour;
(4) have insights into his own motives and behaviour;
(5) evaluate the motivation of others in interpreting situations.

While these characteristics undeniably describe an empathic person, investigators are very wary of using Hogan's scale for measuring aspects of empathy directly related to language learning since experimentation in this domain has not proven to be extremely fruitful.

These failings, however, do not preclude speculation that a sprachgefühl learner could presumably embody many of the characteristics of the empathic person as listed above. Several researchers have tried specifically linking the notion of empathy with the ability to achieve a native-like

pronunciation in a target language. Guiora and Acton (1972) propose that a more empathic person will be favourably predisposed to emulating a native-like pronunciation. In their studies on 'language ego,' 'language ego boundaries,' and 'permeability of these boundaries,' Guiora and Acton chose authentic pronunciation as the realm of behaviour for testing hypotheses about 'empathic capacity.' They believe that both pronunciation ability and empathy are profoundly influenced by the same processes, namely "permeability of ego boundaries." While Guiora and Acton present some intuitively plausible ideas on this issue, the impact of their proposals suffers due to poorly defined terminology.

They describe 'language ego' (without any specification of their sense of the term 'ego') as a 'maturational concept,' a 'self-representation with firm boundaries.' One can only assume that this is synonymous with a notion of ego-preservation, but the clarity of their concept is jeopardized by the nebulous presentation of their terms. From the Guiora study it can be inferred (though not necessarily correctly) that they are proposing that children have what they call 'flexible ego boundaries,' i.e., they are less inhibited than adults who are supposedly more 'restricted' in terms of 'ego boundary flexibility.' Such speculation purports to account for the seemingly amazing ease of young children in assimilating a native-like pronunciation.

Adult L_2 learners do not generally exhibit this facility in acquiring native-like L_2 accents. When adults are forced to function in a second language, the notion of one's 'self-representation' (interpreted as ego-preservation for purposes of discussion) may become an important issue, perhaps more for some than for others. Fearing embarassment due to their blundering in the second language (on either phonological or grammatical levels), adults may become extremely self-conscious because of their lack of facility in the second language. Such an awareness will either motivate the adult L_2 learner to strive for a native-like fluency on all language levels (especially in the realm of perfecting pronunciation) or compel him/her to retract completely from verbal self-expression. Unfortunately, the malleable terminology employed by Guiora et al. is a pervasive characteristic of the L_2 research in this area, often resulting in tenuous proposals, unnecessary confounding of concepts, and a great deal of unproductive 'cross-talk' among L_2 researchers.

Results from studies on native speakers' perceptions of foreign accents have revealed that a native-like pronunciation does strongly influence the negative or positive perception of an L_2 learner's proficiency in the second language. It has been suggested that many second language teachers overestimate their student's competence in the target language if the student exhibits a native-like pronunciation and prosodic ability. When questioned about

the importance of 'sounding native-like,' some L_2 learners have affirmed that achieving an impeccable pronunciation is a major goal in their struggle to conquer the language.

Guiora's speculation that an empathic language learner will be more likely to acquire a native-like pronunciation makes intuitive sense if we accept Acton's and Hogan's description of the empathic person as someone who is capable of "putting himself inside another's head." While such an ability may help, it is clearly not essential, and hardly the only factor involved. Guiora talks about 'ego permeability' in terms of the ability to 'slip in and out of personalities,' reminiscent of Haugen's (1970) comment about "feeling like a different person when speaking a different language." Reports of interviewed L_2 learners in the Naiman et al. (1978) study confirm that inhibition and embarrassment were handicaps in communicative situations: several L_2 learners commented that they felt ridiculous actually expressing themselves in the second language, if not ridiculous, they felt "phony" as if their personalities had changed into something "artificial."

According to Guiora, such a 'personality-switch' entails having a well-defined sense of self in the first place. Presumably, this can be interpreted to mean that a person who is secure will not be daunted by the emotional vulnerability often experienced in an L_2 communicative situation. Whatever a person's perception of himself/herself may be, he/she is concerned with protecting

himself/herself from potentially embarrassing and uncomfortable situations. Protecting oneself in such cases does not, however, imply that one is resistant to change. Obviously, sprachgefühl learners allow themselves to adopt a 'foreign' accent and a 'foreign' personality when they acquire a native-like competence, or they simply see these as integral components of mastering L_2.

In keeping with protecting one's self-concept, Stern (1975) notes that the second language learner must also be willing to risk making mistakes and making a fool of himself if he is to succeed in language learning. A person who takes these 'chances' is inevitably someone who is confident enough to cope with the possibility of being rebuffed and will likely not be overly sensitive to having mistakes corrected. Naiman et al. (1978) confirm that results of studies conducted on Grades 8 - 10 L_2 learners of French reveal that in communicative L_2 situations, a high fear of rejection, low self-esteem, and anxiety were related to failure.

Kleinman's (1978) study on avoidance strategies in adult second language learners confirm the Naiman et al. research findings. Kleinman maintains that personality factors such as anxiety, confidence, and willingness to take risks provide predictive information regarding students who are likely to be "avoiders" or "guessers." "Guessers" are those learners who are willing to try even when they are highly likely to be wrong. L_2 researchers claim that

"guessers" are more likely to seek out situations that require real communication in the new language. Apparently, they have been observed to use a larger range of forms in the target language than those with 'wait and see' personalities who are at the same level of L_2 development (Dulay et al., 1982).

Whether or not the strategies of "avoiding" and "guessing" can be significantly correlated with a person's self-concept requires more thorough investigation. More importantly, however, studies need to be conducted to determine whether adopting one of these strategies significantly affects an L_2 learner's development of native competence in the target language. Also, it would be of value to try to discover whether or not the continued reliance on avoiding and circumlocuting will have detrimental effects in the long run and whether or not the 'guessers' will continue to benefit more from a trial-and-error approach.

While, intuitively, avoidance strategies would appear to be inhibitory and counterproductive, it seems that many successful L_2 learners employ them habitually and confess to having established this pattern early in their L_2 language acquisition process. It may be the case that because 'avoiders' are conscientious about sounding 'native-like,' they refuse to employ anything less than the most effective idiom or the best turn of phrase. When considered from this perspective, it is quite possible that a constant quest to

perfect the 'form' leads not only to a more lucid communicative process but a closer approximation to the native-speaker norm. Contrasted with a 'guesser,' whose primary consideration is to convey a message with less consideration for form, an 'avoider' may eventually make more progress in terms of acquiring a high degree of native-like sensitivity for the inherent idiosyncracies of the target language given his preoccupation with details. Such speculations regarding these two strategy types could presumably be considered for future investigation.

Common to nearly all the second language acquisition models is the concept that successful acquisition of a second language is largely dependent upon the degree of foreign language aptitude of the learner. The term 'aptitude' eluded a precise definition in the L_2 literature until Carroll (1973) decided to pin it down, at least in operational terms, so that its relevance in second language learning could be more carefully considered. Carroll narrowed the breadth of the term by renaming it 'modern language aptitude.' This, he defined as the amount of time required by a student to acquire linguistic competence in a second language in formal or classroom settings. Pimsleur (1966) elaborated on what he perceived to be the actual components of modern language aptitude, describing it as the 'talent' for learning foreign languages...including verbal intelligence (familiarity with words and the ability to reason analytically about verbal materials) as well as the

motivation to learn the language...(Pimsleur, 1966).

Pimsleur's concept of 'verbal knowledge' is compatible with the current term, 'metalinguistic awareness,' i.e., the metalinguistic ability or monitor capacity of learners. Motivation is described as the need or desire the learner feels to learn the second language and it has received a generous amount of attention in the L_2 research field. Efficient L_2 learners are generally perceived to be motivated intrinsically, others extrinsically. Schwartz (1972) lists the sources of intrinsic motivation as anxiety, need to achieve, self-concept, and aspirations; and the extrinsic motivators as sociocultural influences and social reinforcers.

In the L_2 research literature, motivation has been discussed primarily in the extrinsic sense, in terms of sociocultural influences and social reinforcers. Three kinds of motivation have been cited with respect to how they affect language acquisition, namely: (1) integrative motivation, (2) instrumental motivation, and (3) social group identification. Gardner and Lambert (1959) identified integrative motivation as a desire to achieve proficiency in a new language in order to participate in the life of the community that speaks the language. A learner who is integratively motivated "reflects a sincere and personal interest in the people and the culture represented by the group" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132). Instrumental motivation is the desire to achieve proficiency in a new

language for utilitarian reasons, such as getting a job or a promotion, thus reflecting the practical value and advantages of learning a new language. A number of studies have probed the value of integrative and instrumental motivation, showing how each of these types of motivation appears to relate to second language proficiency. It seems clear that both types of motivation can possibly influence the rate and quality of second language acquisition, each being more effective under certain conditions.

The third type of motivation, social group identification, is characterized by the desire to acquire proficiency in a language or language dialect spoken by a social group with which the learner identifies. It is similar to integrative motivation, but integratively motivated learners differ in that they wish to participate in the social and cultural life of the target language speakers while retaining their identity with their own native language group. It seems logical to expect that a learner who has a strong desire to integrate socially will be more motivated to pay closer attention to the nuances of social register, the most frequently used expressions and idioms, more readily picking up these non-rule-governed aspects of the target language.

In a direct way, these three types of motivation reflect the basic attitude of the language learner toward learning languages and toward the target language culture. Many L_2 researchers have tried to measure attitude and

motivation in L_2 learners in order to determine its effects, if any, on successful language acquisition. Among the characteristics considered were attitudes toward the specific language learning situation, parental encouragement, and general interest in learning foreign languages.

Many attitude batteries and personal interviews have been designed to try to discover how a student perceives his individual language situation and his general attitude towards learning the language in a particular situation. Several studies have confirmed that attitude and motivation were often the best overall predictors of success in second language learning (Gardner & Smythe, 1975a; Naiman et al., 1978). Research now indicates that attitudinal and motivational factors have more to do with the successful attainment of communicative skills in a second language than metalinguistic awareness does (Dulay et al., 1982). As already stressed, much, if not most foreign language teaching focuses on the acquisition of formal, conscious knowledge of the language (what Krashen (1977) maintains is learning via the 'monitor'). However, such knowledge is not necessarily related to and is not essential for communicative fluency.

It would be unfair, nonetheless, to create the impression that attitude is the only factor which determines the success or failure of the L_2 learner. A positive attitude may be a necessary but certainly not a sufficient

condition for success. Most of the studies that have related attitude to success in L_2 learning have found that integratively motivated students are more likely to succeed than instrumentally motivated students. Again, the person driven by empathic motives appears to take the lead in acquiring native-like competence.

Cognitive Styles

As several personality characteristics have been demonstrated to be important predictors of successful language learning, even more attention has been focused on the cognitive styles, strategies, and techniques employed by L_2 learners. Cognitive style may be perceived as a product of both cognitive and affective factors. Denny (1974) lists three aspects of cognitive style, all of which involve affective as well as cognitive variables: (1) conceptual style: analytic, relational, and inferential; (2) cognitive tempo: impulsive or reflective; and (3) attentional styles: constriction versus flexibility, i.e., more versus less easily distracted. In the current L_2 literature, researchers have concentrated mainly on conceptual and attentional cognitive styles. One's particular cognitive style will undeniably affect one's choice of strategy or technique.

In the Naiman et al. (1978) study on good language learners, the concepts 'cognitive strategies' and 'techniques' were defined and addressed as reviewed below. Stern (1975) suggests that beginning L_2 learners are

confronted with three major problems:

(1) the presence of L_1 and the inevitable disparity between it and the target language;

(2) the "code-communication dilemma," i.e., the L_2 learner must cope with both the linguistic forms and the message to be conveyed;

(3) the "choice between rational and intuitive learning," i.e., determining which is more advantageous.

In coping with these three 'problems,' Stern claims that certain strategies (which he views as more or less deliberate approaches) and more specific techniques (observable forms of language behaviour) are employed by the L_2 learner.

Stern's third claim, i.e., that L_2 learners must make a 'choice' between rational and intuitive learning appears to be an odd perception of the language learning process. It seems more plausible that 'rational and intuitive learning' are, to a great extent, consequences of the level of language the learner must interpret and employ. As pointed out earlier, certain aspects of language do not lend themselves to being learned via a purely rational or a purely intuitive approach. In some cases (e.g., derivational morphology) certain inflections must be consciously learned, whereas other aspects such as sensitivity to social register or lexical nuance, must be 'intuited' and cannot always be analyzed rationally. On the other hand, he points out that the ideal endpoint of L_2 learning is native-like competence,

which is characterized by the 'intuitive' mastery of the linguistic, cognitive, affective, and sociocultural meanings expressed by language forms (Stern, 1974).

The basic notion that L_2 learners are consciously setting out to hypothesize, to deliberately experiment with a 'rational' or 'intuitive' strategy is primarily predicated on a linguist's approach to language and not an L_2 learner's desire and attempt to communicate. Taking exception to Stern's idea of the L_2 learner as a 'strategy chooser' does not preclude the fact that L_2 learners can and do consciously set out to study the rules of a language, that their metalinguistic awareness may be enhanced due to language exposure, subsequently leading them to adopt a more systematic or rational approach to L_2 learning. Given that the verb 'to intuit' means the power or faculty of attaining to direct knowledge or cognition without evident rational thought and inference, to have access to a quick and ready insight (as defined by Webster's), seems to obviate the idea that an L_2 learner can choose an 'intuitive' strategy over a 'rational' one. But rather importantly, this may not be an appropriate characterization of what is meant when researchers discuss an 'intuitive' learner. He may be seen as one who has somehow developed intuitions about the L_2 system which allow him to operate in a relatively automatic manner, not having to consciously plan each detail of his production.

The exact basis for Stern's distinction between strategies and techniques is not clear, partially as a consequence of his vague characterization of these two terms in the first place. While he willingly lists ten 'strategy types,' he does not elaborate on the notion of technique. Rubin (1975) does not draw this distinction, but defines strategies as the 'techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge.' Ultimately, discussing strategies, techniques, and devices in such a peripheral manner contributes nothing to our understanding of the cognitive processes that psycholinguists presume are operating when tackling a second language. Such processes include perceiving, analyzing, classifying, relating, storing, retrieving, and constructing language output.

Recently, the concepts 'field independence' and 'field dependence' have been introduced for an examination of their potential roles in L_2 acquisition. A 'field independent' person is supposedly typical of a highly rational, 'analytic' personality, whereas a 'field dependent' person is associated with the empathic and open personality (Naiman et al., 1978). From the meagre amount of research conducted so far, it seems that a predictable relationship between field dependence and field independence and successful language learning is emerging. From experimental psychology we learn that a 'field dependent' person perceives all parts of an organized visual field as a total experience and is dominated by the overall field, whereas a 'field

independent' person can experience parts of the field as discrete from the organized ground.

How do these two different analytic personality types tie in with different approaches to language learning? It has been hypothesized that the more successful language learner is the one who can focus on the language stimuli relevant to the language learning task at hand and disregard inappropriate ones. This supposedly relates to the ability to isolate and identify single words. The less successful language learner will be more easily distracted by irrelevant cues as he is dependent on the entire stimulus field and cannot select the proper cues for attention.

On the whole, researchers propose that more analytical, field independent skills appear to be related to the acquisition of metalinguistic skills through conscious, often rule-governed learning. Field independent learners have also been noted to use more novel vocabulary. On the other hand, the field dependent person seems to be more apt to acquire communication skills through a less analytic approach.

The notions of 'field independence' and 'field dependence' (as interpreted by L_2 researchers) are somewhat analogous to the 'cognitive styles' described by Peters (1977) regarding L_1 development. Peters, in looking at child language acquisition, distinguished 'analytic' style learners from 'gestalt' style learners. An 'analytic' style is presumably conducive to rule development, to referential,

and labelling functions. A 'gestalt' style is employed in attempts to use whole utterances in socially appropriate situations and is subsequently used in more conversationally defined contexts. Peters does not, however, perceive these as rigidly fixed styles, but rather as tendencies which are subject to individual variation and the particular communicative situation.

Regardless of an L_2 learner's particular cognitive style or approach to L_2 acquisition, we have ascertained that only a certain amount of the target language can be learned explicitly via rule-learning in formal situations. There are other aspects which must be learned incidentally, through extensive exposure to the target language in an immersion type situation. It has been hypothesized that the nature of the language exposure will determine the extent to which each of these knowledge sources is affected. In a formal classroom, there is more concentration on the language itself, thereby supposedly enhancing explicit knowledge or metalinguistic awareness. An immersion experience would be expected to have maximum effects on intuitive knowledge since the exposure is not intended to highlight new forms or meanings.

Implicit and Explicit Knowledge: The Role of the Monitor

From the results of metalinguistic judgement studies (including grammaticality/acceptability judgements and error-detection tasks), researchers have recognized that the

L_2 learner's judgements will not only be affected by how much of the target language grammar the learners can approximate correctly, but by the nature of their knowledge base. They claim that the linguistic knowledge base can either be principally acquired, i.e., learned incidentally, or controlled by explicit knowledge of learned rules. Defined operationally as 'implicit' and 'explicit' knowledge, it was initially suggested that these representations of knowledge are derived primarily via acquired or learned routes respectively. The concept of a dichotomous linguistic knowledge base with separate accessing routes has been extensively discussed in the L_2 literature in the form of several 'guises.'

The terminology employed to characterize these concepts includes the following dichotomies: 'rational' versus 'intuitive' learning (Stern, 1975), 'learned' versus 'acquired' (Krashen, 1977), 'conscious' versus 'unconscious' (Naiman et al., 1978), 'implicit' versus 'explicit' (Bialystok, 1979), 'analysed' versus 'unanalysed' (Bialystok, 1982), 'controlled' versus 'automatic' (McLaughlin, 1978, 1980), and 'conscious' versus 'subconscious' (Dulay et al., 1982). While some of these labels are being used to refer to actual processes, others characterize two separate knowledge bases. As a result, a certain degree of ambiguity has arisen, thereby clouding the presentation of these concepts and their roles in L_2 acquisition.

Stern (1975), as previously reported, makes a distinction between what he calls 'rational' and 'intuitive' learning, as if they were two strategies which the L_2 learners may consciously choose to employ, i.e., "whether he should treat the language learning task intellectually, conceptually and systematically as a mental problem, or whether he should (consciously) avoid thinking about the lnaguage and absorb the language more intuitively (subconsciously)." While it is undeniable that a learner can choose his language learning environment, a formal instructional situation versus an informal immersion situation (or a combination of both), it is not likely that people can exercise 'control' over their 'subconscious' learning (what may be better interpreted as incidental, intuitive learning).

The concepts of 'conscious' and 'subconscious' learning have been readdressed by Krashen (1977) and provide the premise for his learned versus acquired distinction and the Monitor Theory. In his Monitor Theory, Krashen hypothesizes that adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages, subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning. Language acquisition is described as being very similar to the process children use in acquiring their first languge, requiring 'meaningful interaction in the target language...natural communication, in which speakers are not concerned with the form of their utterances but with the

messages they are conveying and understanding." (Krashen, 1977). Acquirers need not have a conscious awareness of the 'rules' they possess, and may self-correct only on the basis of a 'feel' for the grammaticality. Conscious language learning on the other hand, is thought to be helped a great deal by error correction and the presentation of explicit rules (Krashen & Seliger, 1975).

The learning versus acquired distinction originally stems from Lawler and Selinker's 1971 proposals regarding rule internalization. They postulated two distinct types of cognitive structures: those mechanisms that guide 'automatic' language performance, i.e., performance where speed and spontaneity are crucial given that the learner has not time to apply rules and those mechanisms that guide puzzle or problem-solving performance. The precise nature of these 'mechanisms' is still a mystery. Readdressed by Krashen as conscious versus subconscious processes (learning versus acquisition processes), he explains his version of the internal processing as being dependent on three internal factors. These factors are operant as people learn a second language and include both the subconscious processes and conscious processes which he characterizes in the Monitor Model as: (1) the Filter; (2) the Organizer; and (3) the Monitor. The Filter and the Organizer are the 'subconscious processors' whereas the Monitor is the 'conscious processor.'

In brief, the Filter subconsciously 'screens' language input based on affective factors such as the learner's motives, needs, attitudes, and emotional states. The Organizer is the part of the learner's mind which subconsciously organizes the new language system, and builds up the L_2 rule system. The conscious processor, the Monitor, is the part of the learner's internal system that consciously processes information, such as memorization of grammar rules. When an L_2 learner consciously applies such rules he is said to be relying on the Monitor. In order for the use of the Monitor to be invoked, the situation or task presented to the L_2 learner must warrant a "focus on form." Tasks which focus on linguistic manipulation (e.g., error-detection, a writing task) seem to encourage monitoring while those which focus on communicating do not.

Krashen claims, however, that not all L_2 learners rely on the Monitor to the same degree. The scope of the Monitor use depends on a variety of factors including the learner's personality, and of course, the focus of the linguistic task. Personality types seem to affect the degree to which the monitor is used. It is possible to have extreme Monitor users who are so concerned with editing their output that they sacrifice the fluency of performance, while there are those who scarcely monitor their output, being most concerned with the message and not the medium. Whether or not the Monitor Overusers and Underusers can be correlated with the 'avoider' and 'guesser' personality types is still

speculative.

While the Monitor makes 'conscious editing' possible, Krashen acknowledges that this is not the only source of self-correction. He maintains that a subconsciously acquired grammar also plays a role. This becomes evident when learners report that they correct themselves or others "by feel" and are unable to state the rule that has been violated. He acknowledges that though this phenomenon has been observed, very little is known about it. Krashen's concept of the Monitor, however, restricts its operation to the 'lower-level' rules of the language. He describes lower-level rules as those rules which are 'easy' to conceptualize, namely morphological rules. It has been observed that learners are quite capable of producing fairly high-level constructions without being able to state any kind of relevant rule at all (Dulay et al., 1982). Krashen therefore concludes that this ability appears to be the result of subconscious processes rather than conscious ones.

Krashen's Monitor Model has served to stimulate more investigation in the area of cognitive levels of processing in L_2 acquisition, but it has also served to perpetuate the idea of an extremely machine-like approach to human cognitive processing. Given his description of the Monitor, it represents only one's conscious knowledge of the rules and forms of the language -- what he views as metalinguistic awareness. For him, enhancing one's metalinguistic awareness is dependent on formal training, and this in turn could

imply enhanced monitoring capacity. Nonetheless, we are aware that L_2 learners can produce many complex constructions in communicative situations for which they have no statable rules.

The presentation of a distinction between 'hard' rules and 'easy' rules based on subconscious or conscious learning processes serves to reinforce the idea that there are two discrete knowledge bases which are accessed either subconsciously or consciously. The notion of such a dichotomy arises from Krashen's claim that the ability to produce complex constructions without formal rule knowledge is the result of some subconsious process rather than a conscious metalinguistic process. This precludes the idea that in many cases formal rules are consciously learned at the outset, frequently 'consulted' and employed, and eventually become 'automated.' We can view them as being shifted into the 'implicit' category to become intuitive knowledge. A transition from the explicit or conscious level to the implicit level is precisely the transition an L_2 learner makes as he develops a native-like proficiency in the target language; this was earlier defined as the 'intuitive' mastery of the forms of the language.

It is possible that this transition can also work in the reverse manner. An L_2 learner can learn certain unanalyzed 'chunks' of language in conversational situations, that is, he memorizes certain 'routines.' Routines are part of what is known as 'automatic speech' and

have been greatly discussed in the neurological literature often in relation to aphasics who can lose their rule-governed language behaviour completely, yet manage to keep unanalyzed chunks of speech such as, "How are you?" L_2 learners can learn many colloquial constructions as 'gestalts' and use them extremely effectively in the appropriate communicative situations. They may not 'analyze' these gestalts in terms of rules until later, if in fact, rules do exist. The point, however, is that allowance must be made for a continuum of processing along which an L_2 learner can make transitions from so-called conscious processing (explicit rule-learning) to subconscious processing (implicit-intuiting) and vice versa.

Viewing the Monitor as being restricted to the 'conscious' domain does not account for shifts in focus of attention as the L_2 learner is processing the linguistic and extra-linguistic input. Krashen's univariate idealization of the 'focus on form' Monitor presents an "all-or-none" concept of the L_2 learner's attention to input. The learner is more likely attending to several aspects of the input simultaneously, including gestures, facial expressions, social climate, etc., but concentrating more on some aspects than on others. The L_2 learner's shifts in attention to a particular type of linguistic input cannot be accounted for by the 'monitored' or 'unmonitored' distinction.

McLaughlin (1978; 1980) eliminates the need for discussing language behaviour in terms of underlying

conscious and subconscious processes, presenting the 'controlled' versus 'automatic' distinction. This distinction appears to be more useful in describing the interplay between implicit and explicit knowledge than does Krashen's monitored/unmonitored distinction which requires two independent and dichotomous underlying systems. The 'controlled' aspect of language processing requires attention in the performance of some skill as opposed to the 'automatic' distinction which does not. If we consider the act of driving a car as a relatively complex activity, we realize that when we perform several skills at once, we are forced to do some of them by means of automatic skills, and to pay attention to or to 'control' the performance of others. According to McLaughlin, 'controlled processing' is slower and requires more time for execution than automatic processing.

The notions of controlled and automatic processing come closer to characterizing the spontaneous production of native-like L_2 learners as compared to those learners who are still at the 'controlled' level, i.e., those who have not yet automated their conscious rule-knowledge to the point where it can be accessed unhesitantly and intuitively in the manner of a native-speaker.

Despite what often amounts to nothing more than differences in terminology, L_2 researchers have acknowledged the existence of two distinct learning processes and, theoretically, two distinct knowledge bases. The distinction

between these types of knowledge and the control over them has been most fully detailed by Bialystok (1978, 1979, 1981, 1982). As noted in the previous section, since the introduction of the learned/acquired distinction between L_2 behaviours, researchers have been trying to characterize the properties of these behaviours and their sources. Bialystok (1978) initially concurred with Krashen and suggested that implicit and explicit knowledge bases were accessed via 'acquired' or 'learned' routes respectively.

Bialystok's elaboration of the two types of linguistic knowledge and their roles in L_2 acquisition provides a framework for a future discussion of the 'sprachgefühl' phenomenon. She now claims that the proficient use of a language, either native or non-native, depends on a complex interplay of information that is either explicitly consulted or intuitively based (Bialystok, 1979). Predicated on viewing the language on these two dimensions, Bialystok developed a theoretical model of L_2 learning which she hoped would account for discrepancies both in individual achievement and achievement in different aspects of L_2 learning. The explicit knowledge base is analogous to Krashen's concept of the 'conscious' grammar, i.e., the Monitor. It represents all the conscious knowledge a learner has about the language and the ability to articulate those facts, including grammar and pronunciation rules. The implicit knowledge is the information upon which the learner operates in order to produce responses in the target

language. It is automatic and used spontaneously. It is in this sense that an L_2 learner may claim a sentence 'sounds' or 'feels' right although no direct evidence for the correctness of the sentence can be cited. When reacting from this intuitive knowledge base, a learner can be said to be operating in terms of his sprachgefühl. Bialystok distinguishes these two knowledge sources in terms of function rather than content. She associates a larger implicit source with an ability for greater fluency and a larger explicit knowledge source with extensive knowledge of formal aspects of the language, but this does not necessarily imply an ability to use this information effectively.

In their efforts to try to determine the presumed differential accessing of these two knowledge bases, L_2 researchers have developed several linguistic manipulation tasks which are undoubtedly influenced by Krashen's Monitor Theory. Such tasks (grammaticality/acceptability, error detection) force the L_2 learner to focus on form, which supposedly taps only the 'explicit' knowledge base. Nonetheless, other experiments have persisted to empirically establish the explicit/implicit existence of the dichotomy. The researchers who have continued in this vein maintain that while implicit knowledge is demonstrable, it is not amenable to mental analysis. Explicit knowledge, however, is transferable to other contexts. Using 'time' as a variable to establish which knowledge base is being accessed, they

have postulated that a greater amount of time is necessary for invoking explicit rule-governed knowledge whereas less time is needed for the more implicitly-based intuitive judgements.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPING A SPRACHGEFÜHL MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUE

'Pen and paper' tasks are, by definition, inherently limited, testing at most, the L_2 learner's comprehension of written text. This, however, does not diminish their potential as valuable predictors of an L_2 learner's more general knowledge. While no one would suggest that judgement tasks can be used autonomously, there is no reason why they cannot be developed in such a way as to allow the L_2 learner more opportunity to demonstrate the scope of his intuitive or native-like knowledge. Although most metalinguistic tasks profess to be tapping this particular domain, they have, in fact, restricted the learner's 'intuitive' attentions to grammatical and syntactic issues. Clearly, in order to challenge a learner's sprachgefühl, we need a task which requires judgements from both dimensions of his linguistic knowledge.

To date, L_2 researchers, in constructing error-detection tasks, have not tried incorporating 'semantically-conditioned' errors. For the purposes of discussion, those errors for which there are no definitive grammatical explanations or explicitly stated syntactic or phonological constraints will be referred to as 'semantically-conditioned' errors. They are the errors which require semantic explanations which lie beyond the realm of simple distributional statements. Such errors can be grammatically correct, but highly inappropriate within a

given communicative situation. Producing such 'off-key' errors results in non-native-like communication and the risk of being misinterpreted. A semantically-conditioned error is also subject to degrees of inappropriateness along a scale which is determined by native-speakers within their own cultural domain. Presumably, once an L_2 learner has acquired a native-like sprachgefühl, he is capable of making these finely-tuned intuitive judgements, and detecting the varying degrees of nuances in specific lexical items and their use within certain sociolinguistic contexts. Ideally, then, an error-detection task which involves both the detection of 'syntactically-conditioned' (errors for which there exists an explicitly stated grammatical rule in terms of only syntactic and phonological categories) and semantically-conditioned errors will stand a better chance of attaining a more comprehensive measure of the L_2 learner's explicitly and implicitly based linguistic knowledge.

The notion of sprachgefühl has been originally interpreted as the 'initiator' which indicates that something is amiss (Gass, 1983). Nevertheless, it need not retain its original and somewhat static characterization. Given Gass' definition of sprachgefühl, we recall that within her interpretation of achieving native-like proficiency, sprachgefühl played a comparatively minor role in relation to the explicit or implicit aspect of linguistic knowledge. As discussed earlier, Gass, along with many other L_2 researchers, claims that there is not as great an

increase in the range of 'one's feel' (sprachgefühl) for the language as there is an increase in the ability to pinpoint a trouble spot, specifically recognizing what is wrong. Such a viewpoint is in keeping with the common belief that the 'analyzed' aspect is a necessary precondition for fluency in a second language moreso than for the first language.

While this is intuitively and demonstrably plausible, there is no reason to suggest that the sprachgefühl 'unanalyzed' aspect is not also enhanced as a function of exposure to the target language. Since we have acknowledged that there are many 'unanalyzable' areas of language, these areas cannot be dealt with solely by explicit-analyzed knowledge. Second language instructors of composition, translation, and grammar who are highly trained 'metalinguists' have reported that they must often 'resort to' their sprachgefühl understanding of the language when required to give explanations for either rule-governed or non-rule-governed aspects of the target language. In the case of actually forgetting a once formally-learned rule, L_2 teachers and other highly proficient speakers claim that they must go back and 'reanalyze' the problem or consult a grammar. Their sprachgefühl is presumably very highly-developed since they are operating in a native-like fashion.

It seems justifiable to propose then, that sprachgefühl should be viewed as a dynamic phenomenon as opposed to being only a precursor to developing a more analyzed or explicit

approach to the language. What also seems to have been overlooked is the fact that a native-like feeling for a language can be the result of having automated what was initially a consciously controlled or rule-governed explicit use of knowledge to the point where the rules have become relatively inaccessible. This implies that the ability to analyze explicitly has been lost or set aside as one develops native spontaneity and automaticity in speaking the target language.

Perceiving sprachgefühl as an aspect of language proficiency which can develop simultaneously with the acquisition of explicit-rule knowledge more accurately captures the progression toward native-like competency. An enhanced sprachgefühl is undeniably a requisite for native-like functioning in the target language. It has been suggested that L_2 learners with an immersion experience in the target language culture may be better candidates for developing a highly sensitive sprachgefühl, whereas learners who have been subjected exclusively to formal learning situations may demonstrate less sprachgefühl. Although this is intuitively plausible, it remains to be verified empirically as a great deal rests on the individual's aptitude and attitude regarding language learning in general.

The question which might now be asked is whether or not the development of the 'by feel' (sprachgefühl sensitivity) and the 'by rule' (formal rule-governed knowledge) can be

empirically measured using a metalinguistic judgement task approach. If so, an error-detection task which would fulfill this requirement would have to incorporate both 'semantic' and 'syntactic' type errors, presented within a contextual framework.

The Experiment

Method

To date, relatively few metalinguistic tasks have considered the importance of context for eliciting appropriate native-like intuitions. For the purposes of this study, an error-detection task was developed, taking context into account, as well as two domains of errors, previously defined as semantically-conditioned and syntactically-conditioned. No attempt was made to slot these errors into the traditional error taxonomy, i.e., in terms of describing them as interference or developmental errors, etc. An error-detection task which demanded recognition and/or correction of semantically-conditioned (nuance-type) errors as well as syntactically-conditioned (formal rule-governed) errors seemed an appropriate method for investigating the sprachgefühl phenomenon. Like other paradigms developed to ascertain an L_2 learner's transitional competence, the error-detection task employed in this experiment was also expected to serve as an evaluation metric for determining the learner's competence in this particular, restricted

domain.

Besides requiring that subjects demonstrate both their intuitive and formally learned rule-governed knowledge, this task further requested 'explanations' for the detections and corrections. These explanations could be in the form of 'real' rules (formal grammatical rules) or 'by feel' rules (intuitive reasons regarding context, register, style, etc.) More precisely then, 'Real' rules are defined as explicitly stated rules of grammar which the subjects have learned from a formal language teaching situation or through self-instruction. The 'By Feel' rules, on the other hand, are "rules" which the subjects have learned or intuited during the course of their learning experiences with French. Such "rules" could simply state that a word, words, or structure "felt wrong" or "sounded funny" for whatever reason.

As was previously discussed, the importance of eliciting metalinguistic judgements within a contextual framework cannot be overemphasized. In an experiment dealing with detecting the learner's ability to make subtle distinctions regarding the nuances of a particular lexical choice, to make decisions about the particular level of usage or style, or to predict the applicability of certain rules, a well-defined context must be presented. This enables the L_2 learner to make certain assumptions about the social context of an utterance, as well as other implicit assumptions made by the participants in a discourse.

Sprachgefühl is an aspect of linguistic competence that cannot be identified unless the learner is allowed information about the context in which the discourse takes place, thus making it imperative to take extra-linguistic contextual factors into account: the respective status of speaker and addressee, the type of social situation in which they find themselves, the real-world knowledge or beliefs a speaker brings to a discourse or his lack of desire to commit himself on a position, etc. All of these factors may potentially influence the degree to which specific lexical items, idioms, or certain phrases may be interpreted as errors by native speakers and highly-advanced L_2 learners.

Stimulus Materials

In any experiment concerned with presenting linguistic information in a contextual framework, it is reasonable to choose only one particular framework for the focus of the investigation and reserve other contexts for subsequent investigations. The choice of the framework is ultimately a subjective decision. For the purposes of this experiment a fairly restricted context was chosen.

The stimulus material itself is in the form of a formal letter written by a female French student who is seeking a position in a graduate studies French programme. Incorporated into this letter of 318 words were 30 errors, ranging from simple grammatical errors (such as adjective-noun agreement, tense, and prepositional errors to

more nuance-like errors in terms of their lexical and social appropriateness within the given context.) The so-called nuance-like errors included anglicisms, anglicized syntactic constructions, and certain lexical items and constructions deemed by native French speakers to be either lexically, grammatically, or socially inappropriate for the particular context of this letter. (See Table 1 for a listing of these errors and their classification. High-nuance errors are indicated by asterisks.) Six errors were classified as "high-nuance" errors as they were considered to be more difficult in terms of their subtlety of meaning within certain very restricted contexts. This classification was determined by native French speakers. These six errors were incorporated as a challenge for the Advanced group and to serve as possible discriminators among subjects in the Advanced group.

Part I: The Errors. The errors were selected from a corpus of errors generated by native speakers of English learning French. These students were studying French at three different levels in the University of Alberta French programme. Five first year French students, five third year French students and five fourth year honour's level students translated an English version of the stimulus letter into French during a one hour class period without the aid of a dictionary. The translations were carefully examined and the most consistently recurring errors were noted.

TABLE 1

TAXONOMY OF ERRORS

Err.	Token	Classification	Rule Type
01	le	lexical	Real
02	en la	prepositional	Real
03	avec une licence de lettres	grammar/lexical	By Feel
04*	quatres derniers ans	grammar/lexical	By Feel
05	j'ai éte	tense	By Feel
06	pour	prepositional/ anglicism	Real
07	intéressée beaucoup	grammar	By Feel
08	dans	prepositional	By Feel
09	j'avais	tense	By Feel
10	la bonne opportunité	anglicism-calque	By Feel
11*	le docteur	grammar/lexical	Real
12	j'ai su par après	lexical	By Feel
13	un ancien collèque de vous	grammar/anglicism	Real
14	est specialisé	tense/anglicism	By Feel
15	à	prepositional	By Feel
16	le	grammar/agreement	By Feel
17	leur	grammar/agreement	Real
18*	pour ces raisons	anglicism	By Feel
19*	candidate susceptible	lexical	By Feel
20*	qualifications	lexical	By Feel
21	voudriez	tense	Real
22*	consultante	lexical/anglicism	By Feel
23	Musée de Beaux Arts	grammar	Real
24	la plupart d'eux	grammar/anglicism	Real
25	idées valables de	lexical	By Feel
26	tout	grammar/agreement	Real
27	dans telle manière	grammar/anglicism	Real
28	veuillez-vous	tense/register	Real
29	vous en aurez	tense	Real
30	je voulais	tense	By Feel

Seventy of these errors were incorporated into a French version of the letter, the general framework for which was provided by five native French speakers who had also translated the English version into French. The corrections made by the native French speakers were documented and used as the basis for the 'model letter,' the criterion against which the language learner's judgements would be gauged. In instances where native French speakers' judgements tended to conflict, Le Bon Usage and Le Petit Robert were consulted and then re-examined by native French speakers for a second judgement. A corpus of the 30 most reliable errors (in terms of consensus among 12 native French speakers) was extracted and incorporated into the final version of the stimulus material. The final text was then administered as a pilot study to fifteen native English speakers studying French at three different levels, five subjects in each group. No substantial changes were made to the text following the pilot study and the original 30 errors selected were retained.

The 30 errors were divided into the two categories: semanticically-conditioned and syntactically-conditioned, 17 of the former and 13 of the latter. The 17 semantically-conditioned errors were more amenable to a 'By Feel' rule analysis as no 'Real' rule, i.e., a formal grammatical rule, could be applied to provide the necessary correction. The 13 syntactically-conditioned errors, however, could be covered by a 'Real' rule analysis. (See Table 1 for the exact

specification.)

The classification of these 30 errors into two separate categories was not as clear-cut for some errors as for others. Again, the often fuzzy line between syntax and semantics was not easy to draw. Whether a certain error was syntactically or/and semantically conditioned was sometimes a matter of discussion among the native-French speakers. Since a main objective of the study was to determine whether or not the sprachgefühl could be quantified, there was an intentional bias toward a larger number of semantic errors. These errors were randomized throughout the text. Clauses without errors were included in order to minimize the predictability of finding an error per clause. A brief look at some of the actual error tokens may help to clarify the difference between the 17 errors designated as semantically-conditioned versus the 13 errors which are syntactically-conditioned (Refer to Table 1). For Error 01, e.g., 'le' is an article omitted from the text. In French, any title such as 'directeur', 'professeur', 'editeur' must be preceded by the appropriate article. This rule is usually formally taught. Compare Error 01 with an error such as Error 10, 'la bonne opportunité.' While this expression is perfectly comprehensible to a native French speaker, the use of 'opportunité' in this instance appears terribly lofty and somewhat archaic, never uttered by a native speaker. The correct expression is 'l'occasion,' which carries the notion of opportunity, chance, and occasion in English. Error 10 is

a typical example of a 'calque' (a direct translation from English) which works grammatically and even semantically to a degree, but it is not at all acceptable to native-French speakers.

The following six errors (04, 11, 18, 19, 20 and 22) were deemed by native French speakers to be of 'high-nuance' quality. Most of them are lexical items subject to restricted distribution within a highly-defined context. For example, Error 22, 'consultante,' is a perfectly acceptable lexical item in French (See Appendix D, Error 22). Within this particular context, however, the word 'consultante' is used inappropriately. In French, this word can be used only in the medical sense, as in 'consulting physician.' A native speaker would use the word 'expert-conseil' or simply 'expert' in the situation specified by the context. In this case the consulting is being done in a museum, not in a hospital. To some degree, the use of 'consultante' in this instance is a false-cognate. We could use the English word 'consultant' in the same context so we take the liberty of using it as freely in French resulting in a non-native usage (see Table 1).

For the actual experiment each subject was issued a set of written instructions in a pamphlet containing the stimulus material (see Appendices A, B, C, and D). The letter to be corrected was presented on two adjoining pages, double-spaced, so that it could be read easily and in its entirety. The letter was then reproduced, triple-spaced on

three separate pages with a blank page intervening. The triple spacing allowed for any corrections the subject would want to make. The blank pages across from each page of text made it possible for the subjects to write rules and/or explanations for the corrections made on the opposite page of the text.

To begin the task, the subjects were requested to have a pen and pencil on hand as they would be asked to perform two passes at the task. The written instructions were read by the experimenter and the subjects were encouraged to ask any questions before commencing the task. A complete set of instructions to the subjects may be found in Appendix A.

Essentially, the subjects were asked to proof-read the text, i.e., make any changes they felt necessary to perfect the text. First, they were asked to simply read the letter, then underline in pen any errors they thought they had found including any word, words, or sentences which did not seem right to them for whatever reason. After completion of the first pass, they were asked to go back and check for any errors they might have missed the first time. They were to underline these with pencil and correct as they did on the first pass. After having numbered all the errors they had found, the subjects were ready for the second half of the task. They were then asked to give rules and/or explanations for the corrections they had made.

A maximum time limit of approximately one hour was allocated for this task. Subjects were not allowed access to

a dictionary or a grammar. While a restricted time allotment has been considered as a dependent variable in other error-detection experiments, it was not considered as being conceptually relevant to the nature of this experiment. Nonetheless, longer than one hour for the completion of the task was discouraged because of the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, i.e., a subject's first-hand intuitive response was preferred as opposed to a more ponderous and researched response.

The outcome of the pilot study indicated that one hour was sufficient for most Beginners, Intermediates, and Advanced subjects to read, correct, and write rules and explanations. Beginners and Intermediates tended to need most of the hour mainly for reading and correcting the text and did not write elaborate rules, whereas the Advanced group spent more time making more modifications to the text and writing lengthier rules and explanations.

The Beginners and Intermediates were monitored in an in-class situation whereas the Advanced subjects were allowed to take the task home, to time themselves, and then return the task as soon as possible. This allowance was permitted due to the pragmatic problems of testing at specified times because of the relative inaccessibility of most of the Advanced speakers. In general, the amount of time taken to do the error-detection task itself and to write rules ranged from 35 minutes to 120 minutes.

Part II: The Language Learning Questionnaire. A second component of the stimulus material for this experiment included a Language Learning Questionnaire which the subjects were requested to complete on their own time and then return to the experimenter. The Questionnaire consisted of a series of multiple choice and rank-order type questions. Many of these questions were constructed on the basis of the kinds of questions asked in oral interviews by Naiman et al., 1978 in The Good Language Learner as well as questions from self-evaluation questionnaires. The questions were either modified slightly or changed entirely to accomodate to the purposes of this experiment.

In the first part of the questionnaire subjects were asked about their personal history and their exposure to languages other than English. They were also asked to rate their proficiency in English, French, and any other language they had learned or been exposed to. The self-rating was based on a scale from 1 to 4, starting with Elementary knowledge, progressing to Working knowledge, and ultimately to an Advanced Native-like knowledge. The criteria for determining a ranking in one of these categories were listed for four modes: reading, writing, comprehension, and oral production.

Subjects were then questioned on whether or not they had learned French formally (school-situation), or informally (non-school situation), or through a combination of both. They were also asked about their reasons for

studying French and what factors they perceived as being most crucial to successful second language learning, etc. For further details, see the reproduction of the Language Learning Questionnaire which may be found in Appendix E.

This questionnaire was not tested for external validity as it was not used as a major part of the statistical analysis but rather as a complement to the experiment in terms of the information it provided for discussion purposes in light of the findings. Some information from the questionnaire was extracted and considered on an analytical level: factors such as age, sex, number of languages spoken, number of years of education, if subjects were or had been French majors or had an immersion experience, and their self-appraisal regarding their language learning ability were all considered to determine whether or not such factors affected the overall performance on the error-detection task in any significant manner.

Subjects

A total of 60 subjects participated in this experiment. Since one purpose of the study was to determine whether or not subjects at different levels of study in French would exhibit varying degrees of competence in their error-detection and correction performance, three different proficiency groups were established a priori. The groups were represented as Beginners, Intermediates, and Advanced, respectively.

The Beginner's group consisted of 20 subjects all in their first or second year of French studies, the majority of whom had completed the standard Canadian high-school French programme. Most had no previous immersion experience in French. The Intermediate group was represented by students in their third and fourth years of French study at the university level and the twenty chosen for this experiment were judged by their professors to be of intermediate standing according to their previous in-class performance. All Beginner and Intermediate subjects were students enrolled in French courses at the University of Alberta.

The Advanced group consisted of 20 subjects from various language learning backgrounds. While many of them had studied French formally (or are presently studying French) at the graduate level at the University of Alberta, others had acquired their French through their work and/or extended immersion experience. All were native English speakers and none were from a bilingual family background. In this sense, the Advanced group were homogeneous as all speakers had a well-established first language system before commencing the second language system, namely French. The subjects ranged in age from 18 to 47 years.

Since the Advanced group was easily definable in terms of their level within the system, a strong emphasis was placed on their self-assessment with regard to their competence in French in the domains of reading, writing,

aural comprehension, and oral production. If they rated themselves between 3 and 4 on the self-rating scale with respect to the criteria outlined in the Language Learning Questionnaire and revealed extensive previous formal and informal training in French in response to specific questions in the questionnaire, they were accepted as Advanced speakers of French.

Self-assessment is more or less a new field in language testing and has been met with varying degrees of scepticism by language proficiency researchers. The underlying premise for having learners rate themselves is the hypothesis that most learners have a certain capacity for determining their own language ability provided they have at their disposal suitable means which can help them express their intuitions. So, by way of example in the Language Learning Questionnaire, very concrete situations were specified, each of which requires mastery of a particular language skill. The learner could indicate his ability to cope with each situation, reading, writing, etc., on a scale ranging from no ability at all to complete linguistic mastery.

There is no doubt that authentic language situations (i.e., communicative situations) provide the most valid opportunities for self-evaluation. It is in the actual use of the language, in real-life settings, that one may ultimately test one's communicative ability. Nonetheless, after having experience in assessing oneself in various natural situations, it is not unreasonable to expect that

self-assesment can be considered reliable enough to be used as an aid in autonomous evaluation.

The results of field experience in adult education institutions in Sweden in which learners were asked to make independent assessments in each of the four language skills mentioned above revealed that self-assessments did correlate with external evaluation measures, thus indicating that learners' appreciation of their own abilities may be more realistic and accurate than is sometimes thought (Oskarsson, 1978).

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

The results of the performance of the 60 subjects in the three groups: Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced learners, are presented in this chapter. Two types of analyses were conducted on the data: first, an assessment of the error-detection test and its internal validity as an evaluation metric for the phenomenon addressed in the preceding chapter; and second, an examination of the L_2 learner-related factors.

Individual subject response sheets were scored for the 30 errors according to the following system:

-1 if an error was not detected

0 if an error was detected but not corrected

+1 if an error was detected and corrected

This last category was in conformity with the norms established from the native speaker judgements described earlier. Counts of the incidence of these three codes were tabulated, and then composite scores of various types were constructed. A 'Detection' score consisted of a count of all zeros and +1's. A 'Total' score based on the sum of all three code values was also established. In addition, a 'Hypercorrection' score was tabulated separately. This was a count of the number of attempted corrections of items that were actually correct to begin with.

As previously outlined, the error-detection test consisted of two main tasks: first, to detect and correct

any errors found, and secondly, to provide rules or explanations for the errors detected. The results of the performance on these tasks will be discussed under two separate subcategories in the section to follow.

The Error-Detection Test as an Evaluation Metric

In the -1 (Non-Detection) category, subjects made use of the entire scale of possible values ranging from one non-detection to thirty non-detections, thus illustrating that the range of difficulty of the errors covered the whole spectrum (see Table 2). Within the subject groups, the means were 25.9, 19.8, and 7.1 for Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced subjects respectively, exhibiting a clear pattern of increasing skill.

As Table 3 represents, the 0 (Detection) category revealed a more restricted distribution. Detections without corrections ranged from one to only ten detections. Thus, if an error was detected, some level of explanation or correction was usually offered. This, of course, is an obvious consequence of the test procedure and the fact that something as simple as "sounds funny" was an acceptable attempted explanation.

The +1 (Detection and Correction) category was similar to the -1 (Non-Detection) category with subjects making as few as one correction and as many as 28. The frequency counts for the -1 and +1 scoring categories, the latter shown in Table 4, illustrate the differential capacity of

TABLE 2

NO DETECTION (RESPONSE CODE = -1)

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
1	2	3.3	3.3
4	1	1.7	5.0
5	2	3.3	8.3
6	4	6.7	15.0
7	3	5.0	20.0
8	4	6.7	26.7
10	2	3.3	30.0
11	2	3.3	33.3
13	1	1.7	35.0
14	2	3.3	38.3
15	1	1.7	40.0
18	2	3.3	43.3
19	1	1.7	45.0
20	2	3.3	48.3
21	4	6.7	55.0
22	4	6.7	61.7
23	4	6.7	68.3
24	2	3.3	71.7
25	5	8.3	80.0
26	4	6.7	86.7
27	1	1.7	88.3
28	3	5.0	93.3
29	3	5.0	98.3
30	1	1.7	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

the 30 errors in terms of how they are treated by the three subject groups. Within groups, the data again show a clear distinction with means of 1.5, 5.7, and 19.7 for Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced subjects.

With regard to the Hypercorrection category, the frequency counts in Table 5 simply revealed that while some subjects never hypercorrected, 68.3% of the subjects made hypercorrections within the 1 to 6 range, and there was a

TABLE 3

DETECTION/NO CORRECTION (RESPONSE CODE = 0)

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
0	6	10.0	10.0
1	10	16.7	26.7
2	7	11.7	38.3
3	9	15.0	53.3
4	12	20.0	73.3
5	5	8.3	81.7
6	5	8.3	90.0
7	2	3.3	93.3
8	1	1.7	95.0
9	2	3.3	98.3
10	1	1.7	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

smaller group constituting 26.7% who made as many as 8 to 16 hypercorrections. Since hypercorrection was considered to be more of a tangential problem in this thesis, these findings will be addressed briefly only in the discussion on learner-related factors.

The Errors

The distribution of responses for each error by the three groups is displayed in Appendix F. The 30 errors in this test were individually cross-tabulated with the three subject groups, in terms of whether they were missed entirely (-1), simply detected but not corrected (0), or detected and corrected (+1). Group percentages were calculated for each of the three scoring categories on each of the 30 errors. An example of such a tabulation is given

TABLE 4

DETECTION/CORRECTION (RESPONSE CODE = +1)

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
0	9	15.0	15.0
1	3	5.0	20.0
2	7	11.7	31.7
3	3	5.0	36.7
4	6	10.0	46.7
5	2	3.3	50.0
6	2	3.3	53.3
7	3	5.0	58.3
8	1	1.7	60.0
9	1	1.7	61.7
10	1	1.7	63.3
13	3	5.0	68.3
14	1	1.7	70.0
15	1	1.7	71.7
16	3	5.0	76.7
18	1	1.7	78.3
19	3	5.0	83.3
20	1	1.7	85.0
21	3	5.0	90.0
22	2	3.3	93.3
23	1	1.7	95.0
24	1	1.7	96.7
28	2	3.3	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

in Table 6. Since the cross-tabulation on the errors involved frequency counts, a Chi-Square test was carried out on each error to determine whether or not the three subject groups differed significantly in their treatment of each error. The results of the Chi-Square tests proved to be significant (at $p < .01$) for 24 of the 30 errors. In other words, each of the 24 error tokens exhibited internal validity with respect to the discriminative behaviour of the three subject groups. Error 08: 'dans' (prepositional) in

TABLE 5

HYPERCORRECTIONS

No. of Hypercorrections	Frequency	Percent
0	7	11.7
1	4	6.7
2	6	10.0
3	6	10.0
4	6	10.0
5	7	11.7
6	5	8.3
7	1	1.7
8	2	3.3
9	6	10.0
10	2	3.3
11	1	1.7
12	2	3.3
13	2	3.3
14	1	1.7
15	1	1.7
16	1	1.7

Table 6 is an illustration of an error which aptly served to distinguish all three groups.

The six errors which did not show this clear three-way distinction (04, 11, 18, 19, 20, and 22) differed in their discriminatory effects from the other 24. While they also exhibited significant differences according to the Chi-Square statistic, their discriminatory power was confined to distinguishing the Advanced group from the two lower groups, as well as serving to make distinctions within the Advanced group itself. This was one of the most gratifying results of this experiment as these errors were purposely selected for their high-nuance quality. These were errors deemed by native French speakers to be especially

TABLE 6

RESPONSE PERCENTAGES BY GROUP FOR ERROR 08

Group	RESPONSES		
	Missed (-1)	Detected (0)	Corrected (+1)
Advanced	5	0	95
Intermediate	35	40	25
Beginner	65	30	5
TOTAL	35.0	23.3	41.7

subtle in terms of their lexical or social appropriateness within the given context. They were included to provide an upper end to the scale as demonstrated by Error 22 (see Appendix E). This error was missed totally by Beginners and Intermediates and detected only 15% of the time by the Advanced Group.

In summary then, a full review of Appendix F reveals that the items selected as errors adequately covered the range of competence of the three different group levels and served to differentiate learners within all of the groups.

Differences Among Group Performances

To determine whether or not the group means differed significantly from each other in terms of Non-Detection (-1), Detection/No Correction (0), and Detection and Correction (+1), a one-way analysis of variance was

conducted on each scoring category for each group. For the -1 category, the performance of each group in terms of their respective means was significantly different. As expected, the group means, mentioned earlier, revealed a progressive increase in Non-Detection for the Intermediates and Beginners. An a posteriori Tukey test confirmed these group mean differences at the .05 level. These findings correspond with those of Arthur (1980), and Gass (1983). The +1 category was essentially the inverse of the -1 category and the group means given before, for all three groups were significantly different as confirmed by a Tukey test.

The pattern of means for the 0 category displayed an interesting pattern. These were 3.2, 4.5, and 2.5 for Advanced, Intermediate, and Beginners, but the interpretation is probably qualitatively different for the three groups. The low value for Beginners is indicative of low detection ability in general as indicated by their high '-1' counts. The low value for the Advanced subjects is indicative of the fact that, if they detected an error, they were also able to correct it, thereby reducing their 0 counts. Intermediate subjects were just that, they detected better than Beginners, but corrected less well compared to Advanced subjects. It appears that the Beginner's sprachgefühl is much less developed at this stage in comparison to the Intermediates and Advanced learners. The Intermediate group and the Advanced group are distinguished from one another, however, by their ability to correct. Such

a significant difference between Intermediate and Advanced learners in correction performance is a valuable finding. Corder (1971), White (1979), Arthur (1980), and Gass (1983), predicted such an outcome on the basis of Corder's transitional competence notion, i.e., that the more advanced a learner becomes in approximating native-like competency, the more he/she should demonstrate native-like ability to detect and correct 'interlanguage' errors. None of the error detection tasks developed to date have been successful in validating this hypothesis.

To obtain a more accurate assessment of each group's ability to simply detect that something was amiss (to check out their overall 'gefühl'), a Total Detection score was created by combining the 0 Detection scores with the +1 Detection/Correction scores. Again, the group means were compared and found to be significantly different. The Advanced group (Mean=22.9) still holding the lead and the Intermediates (Mean=10.2) and Beginners (Mean=4.1) with their respective differential lower scores.

In addition to the Total Detection score, A Net-Detection score was calculated which took into consideration the number of Hypercorrections made by each subject. Hypercorrections were counted as the number of times correct tokens were incorrectly perceived as errors. These Hypercorrections were subtracted from the Detection scores for each subject, resulting in a Net-Detection score. The Net-Detection score also proved to differentiate the

three groups significantly. The respective means were 19.7, 3.6, and -2.4 with the latter negative value suggesting that Beginners were probably doing considerable guessing on this test.

The Hypercorrections were analyzed apart from the other scores by a one-way analysis of variance. A Tukey test revealed that the Beginners and Intermediates both produced more than the Advanced group in terms of Hypercorrecting but they did not differ significantly from each other in this behaviour. Thus, the tendency to introduce errors in the process of editing was most pronounced at the lower proficiency levels. In fact, the group means for the Beginners and the Intermediates were exactly the same, both being 6.5, whereas the Advanced group mean was 3.2. The Advanced group is distinguished then, by considerably less Hypercorrecting as predicted by Arthur(1980) and Gass(1983).

Rule-Type Usage

The second half of the error-detection task involved providing rules and/or explanations for the errors detected and corrected. A statistical analysis was carried out to determine the frequency and type of rule usage. As there were 30 errors in the test, the subjects could produce a maximum of 30 correct rules or explanations. Since the errors were divided into two main categories: (1) 'Semantically-conditioned' errors and; (2) 'Syntactically-conditioned' errors, the subjects could provide essentially

two rule types: (1) 'By Feel' rules and ; (2) 'Real' Rules. However, they could also provide a 'By Feel' Rule when there actually existed a 'Real' Rule, given that they could not articulate a precise grammatical rule. Thus, a third rule category (3) 'Feel for Real' Rules was created to accomodate this type of rule production.

The total number of By Feel Rules and Real Rules possible were 17 and 13 respectively. The number and type of rules given by each subject was counted and recorded for the 30 possibilities only. Rules given for Hypercorrections were not counted. The total number of By Feel Rules (including Feel for Real substitutions) and Real Rules was counted out of 30 for an overall rule production score. The first part of the analysis involved a frequency count to determine to what degree the three groups made use of each category. Tables 7a, 7b, and 7c contain the frequency counts on the three possible rule types employed by the 60 subjects.

In the By Feel Rule category, subjects made use of the entire range from no By Feel Rule at all, to the possible total of 17 rules. In the Real Rule category, 53.3% of the subjects tended to produce as few as 0 to 2 rules. A range of 3 to 10 Real Rules were produced by the remaining 46.7%.

To determine whether or not there was differential rule usage in terms of type and frequency among the three different groups out of the 30 possible total rules, the number of By Feel Rules and Real Rules were counted separately out of their respective possible totals and the

TABLE 7a

BY FEEL RULES

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
0	8	13.3	13.3
1	6	10.0	23.3
2	6	10.0	33.3
3	6	10.0	43.3
4	5	8.3	51.7
5	3	5.0	56.7
6	6	10.0	66.7
8	1	1.7	68.3
9	8	13.3	81.7
11	4	6.7	88.3
12	2	3.3	91.7
14	3	5.0	96.7
15	1	1.7	98.3
17	1	1.7	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

TABLE 7b

FEEL FOR REAL RULES

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
0	26	43.3	43.3
1	21	35.0	78.3
2	3	5.0	83.3
3	4	6.7	90.0
4	4	6.7	96.7
5	1	1.7	98.3
6	1	1.7	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

TABLE 7c

REAL RULES

Count	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
0	12	20.0	20.0
1	12	20.0	40.0
2	8	13.3	53.3
3	6	10.0	63.3
4	5	8.3	71.7
5	3	5.0	76.7
6	4	6.7	83.3
7	2	3.3	86.7
8	4	6.7	98.3
9	2	3.3	96.7
10	2	3.3	100.0
TOTAL	60	100.0	

percentage for each rule type was calculated. An analysis of variance of the counts and Tukey tests revealed the following results for the three possible categories:

(1) By Feel Rules: The three groups differed significantly in terms of the number of By Feel Rules employed, starting with the Beginners (1.3) who used fewer By Feel Rules as compared to the Intermediate (4.4) and Advanced groups (10.6) whose "by feel" function increased with proficiency.

(2) Feel for Real Rules: Since this category represents the number of By Feel Rules given when a Real Rule could have been provided, it is interesting that the Advanced group (2.2) used significantly more By Feel Rules than did the Intermediates (0.7) and the Beginners (0.3). A Tukey test

revealed that the Beginners and Intermediates did not differ in the way they used this rule category. The implications of the Advanced group's tendency to overuse the By Feel Rules will be discussed below.

(3) Real Rules: The Real Rule means produced by the three groups in this case indicated a distinct increase in explicit rule knowledge as the group proficiency level increased. Such a finding corroborates the commonly held belief among L_2 researchers that a learner's 'analyzed' knowledge develops much more rapidly as a function of proficiency. What they do not predict, however, is that the range of one's sprachgefühl will also increase. The implications of defining sprachgefühl as a dynamic phenomenon will be discussed later.

The Advanced group used a significantly greater number of Real Rules (6.1) than did the Intermediates (2.5) and Beginners (0.8). The Intermediates, in turn, used significantly more Real Rules than did the Beginners. These results are illustrated in Figure 1 which gives the percentage breakdown of the distribution by subject groups in terms of their use of the three different rule categories out of a possible total of 30 rules. It is evident then, that the Advanced learners have more explicit knowledge at their disposal, complemented with their heightened sensitivity to errors which required sprachgefühl reaction. Such findings are not surprising given that the three

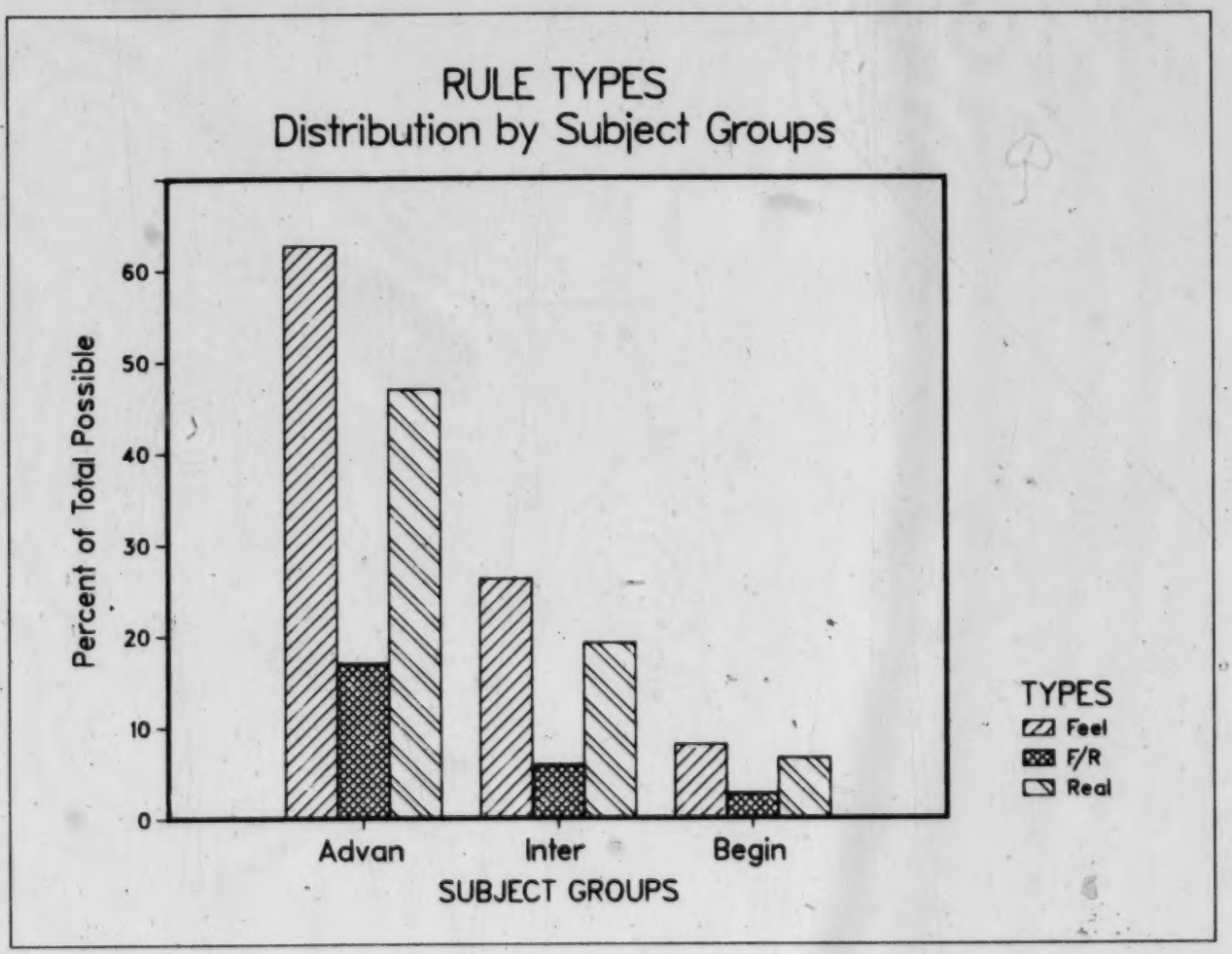
RULE TYPES
Distribution by Subject Groups
Percent of Total Possible
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Advan
Inter
Begin
SUBJECT GROUPS
TYPES
Feel
F/R
Real

Figure 1

subject group levels were already carefully defined prior to the task and that the instructions for the task required subjects to provide rules for two very carefully defined rule groups. What the data do demonstrate is that the testing procedure clearly reflects this group structure, indicating that the testing procedure is, in fact, valid for the intent of the study.

The same data were then reanalyzed in terms of the total number of By Feel rules and Real Rules actually produced by each subject as opposed to the total number of rules possible. For example; if a Beginner produced a total of 10 rules out of 30, the number of By Feel Rules and Real Rules were counted out of 10 and the relative percentages for each rule type were calculated. By looking at Figure 2, we see that only the elevation of the profile for the three subject groups has changed dramatically.

Out of the total number of rules produced by each group, the groups tend to use approximately the same proportion of each rule type. No significant difference ($p < .01$) was found regarding the degree to which each subject made use of the By Feel Rules, the By Feel for Real Rules and the Real Rule category. It is interesting, however, to note that these three groups made virtually equal use of the Feel for Real Rule category. In the case of the Beginners, their explicit rule knowledge is very limited (as illustrated in Figure 1), and they simply could not articulate a Real Rule, and so resorted to "sounds funny."

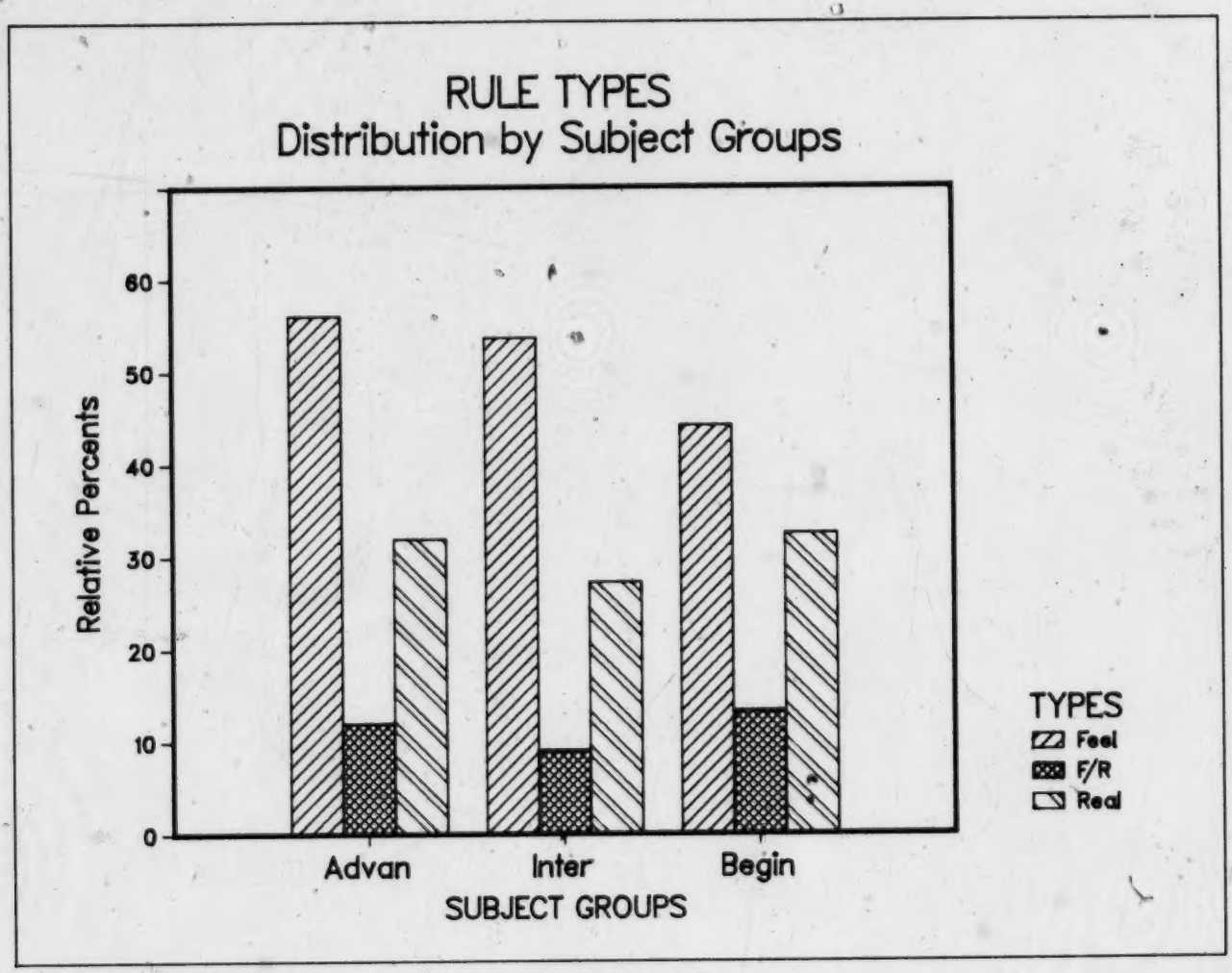
RULE TYPES
Distribution by Subject Groups
Relative Percents
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Advan
Inter
Begin
SUBJECT GROUPS
TYPES
Feel
F/R
Real

Figure 2

For the Intermediates and the Advanced speakers, the reason is not so clear-cut. As discussed previously, their By Feel Rules differed qualitatively from the Beginners. Since the Feel for Real Rule category is in fact a subcategory of the Real Rule category, we can speculate about two things. Either they never knew a Real Rule to begin with, and so responded intuitively, or they once knew a rule which has subsequently become 'automated' and ultimately 'intuitive.' The latter speculation could be tested only in a longitudinal study of very advanced language learners who have had prolonged exposure to the language.

Learner-Related Factors

Several learner-related factors were considered for the analysis and interpretation of results: Sex, age, number of years of education, formal training (French major), immersion experience, learner's competence in other languages, propensity to hypercorrect, and the learner's perception of his/her language learning ability.

The distinct lack of correlation between sex and any of the dependent variables was not a surprising finding. As expected, age and level of education were positively correlated with improved performance in overall detection ability, but these two factors are essentially inextricable from the definition of the Advanced group. The Advanced group was primarily comprised of people at the graduate level of French or beyond. These results were determined by

a series of Median tests in which each learner-related factor was compared with each group's overall performance. Cross-tabulations were conducted to check whether there were any significant interactions among learner-variables. For the most part, Group classifications tended to predict the results.

Effects of Formal Training and Immersion

As formal training (school situation) in a second language and immersion experience (non-school situation) have been suggested to affect the learning strategies employed by second language learners, an analysis was carried out to determine whether or not these two variables would have any significant effect on the rule type usage of the three subject groups. The subject groups were thereby divided into the following four categories: (1) Non-French major and Immersion, (2) French major and no Immersion, (3) French major and Immersion, (4) Non-French major and no Immersion.

For each of the above categories the means were calculated for the percentage of rule use possible in the three rule categories: By Feel Rules, By Feel for Real, and Real Rules, as indicated in Table 8. There are suggestions in the L_2 literature regarding formally versus informally trained language learners which would lead one to hypothesize that the more formally trained L_2 learners might make greater use of their explicit rule-governed knowledge and operate less

TABLE 8

MEAN PERCENT OF RULE TYPE USAGE

Group	French Major	Immer.	N	RULE TYPE Feel	Feel/Real	Real
Advan.	Yes	Yes	7	58	12	31
		No	4	54	9	37
	No	Yes	9	56	14	31
	Group Means		20	56	12	32
Inter.	Yes	Yes	3	64	7	29
		No	2	50	8	42
	No	Yes	4	51	5	19
		No	11	53	11	27
	Group Means		20	54	9	27
Begin.	Yes	No	2	0	50	50
	No	Yes	1	50	50	0
		No	17	49	7	32
	Group Means		20	51	11	31

on a "by feel" correction basis. French majors with immersion experience, however, might be expected to take advantage of both explicit and implicit knowledge bases somewhat equally. Subjects with little formal training and mostly immersion experience were expected to utilize more "by feel" rules as their explicit rule knowledge would be presumably less than subjects formally trained.

The results as presented in Table 8, indicate that for all three groups, there were no significant differences in rule-type usage as a result of formal or informal training or the combination of the two.

The effects of formal training and immersion were also analyzed to determine whether or not they exerted any significant impact on the three scoring categories: (-1) No Detection, (0) Detection/No Correction, (+1) Detection and Correction. A Median Test was used to determine whether or not the differently trained subjects (e.g., the immersion and non-immersion learners) would differ in their performance. Whether or not a subject was a French major did not influence scores on the various metrics being considered here. It must be kept in mind, however, that the non-majors in this study still had fairly comparable backgrounds in French. In contrast, immersion experience did influence detection ($p < .001$), -1 scores ($p < .001$), and +1 scores ($p < .001$) all in the direction of improved performance for those with this type of experience.

Exposure to Other Languages

The subject's exposure to other languages did not prove to be a significant factor for distinguishing performances on the overall detection score. While there was an indication of movement in the right direction, this was not statistically significant. Since many subjects listed languages to which they had merely been exposed and in which they were not particularly competent, it might be reasonable to assume that in order for metalinguistic awareness (which is supposedly enhanced as a function of exposure to other languages) to exhibit a strong effect in improving performance, a particular level of competence in other languages may be prerequisite for significant difference in performance and not merely passive exposure to other languages.

Self-Perception of Language Learning Ability

Subjects were asked to give a self-assessment of their ability to learn languages, i.e., whether they perceived themselves as Gifted, Strong, Average, or Weak. As Table 9 indicates, their overall Detection scores follow to some degree their perceptions of themselves. Subjects who perceived themselves to be Gifted or Weak had the most accurate perception of their ability, whereas subjects who perceived themselves as Strong or Average were appropriately modest as their particular self-perceptions were not especially representative of their ability.

TABLE 9

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND DETECTION ABILITY

		Gifted	Strong	Average	Weak
Detection	Greater than Median	12	15	2	0
	Less than Median	1	11	15	4

Hypercorrecting

Learner variables such as years of education, formal or informal language training, exposure to other languages, or self-perception did not exercise any direct effect on a subject's propensity to hypercorrect. Nevertheless, it was obvious from the group differences as indicated by an analysis of variance that the Advanced group did reveal a strong tendency for much less hypercorrecting than did the Intermediates or Beginners. Presumably then, an interplay of the learner-related factors as outlined above do play a role in cutting down on hypercorrection at the Advanced level. Such a tendency has been predicted by Arthur(1980) and Gass(1983) but has not been proven to be statistically significant in experiments to date.

A Discussion of the Experimental Findings

The preceding section dealt primarily with the results and discussion of the statistical interrelationships among the variety of variables addressed and their relationships to the criterion measures of success on the error-detection test. While it is not possible to elaborate on any parts of the experiment that were not directly connected to the statistical relationships discovered, the following section will present several aspects of the study which demand more detailed discussion and exploration.

The Errors and Group Performance

As the 30 errors selected for this experiment were presented in context, a copy of the errors within the actual text is provided in Appendix D. (The results of the group performance on these errors are illustrated in Appendix F.) Since these 30 errors were actual production errors made by L_2 learners of French at different levels of 'transitional competence,' they presumably reflect, to a certain degree, a possible hierarchy of errors representative of L_2 learners at different stages of development.

The errors, however, were not categorized in the traditional manner. No attempt was made to ascribe 'processing' type labels to the individual tokens. In other words, they were not described as 'interference' or 'developmental' errors, or as errors of omission or addition, etc. Instead, they were identified by native

French speakers under such categories as: Anglicisms, Tense, Prepositional, lexical-nuance errors, etc., but simply for classification purposes. The only relevant distinction between the errors was the division made between those which were 'semantically' conditioned versus 'syntactically' conditioned (as described in Chapter III).

Since the objective of this study was to determine whether or not one could measure an L_2 learner's sensitivity for detecting semantically-conditioned errors within a precise context, the above distinction was the crucial factor. Taking such an approach then, automatically excludes the need for defining each error in terms of a precise category. To date, L_2 researchers have not been successful in determining sources of errors by simply slotting errors into definitive categories as if they were representative of actual processes employed by L_2 learners.

There is no doubt, however, that the types of errors selected for this study could be characterized in greater detail regarding their specific function in the language. They could then be subjected to a more in-depth analysis in view of how they are treated by different subject groups. For the present study, which was essentially a first attempt to investigate the possibility of quantifying 'sprachgefühl,' this type of analysis could be considered as a next plausible step in embellishing the power of the technique. In a study with a limited corpus of 30 errors, only 17 of which were 'sprachgefühl' sensitive, an

individual analysis of the tokens themselves did not seem warranted.

For the purposes of discussion, however, it is interesting to look at the six errors (04, 11, 18, 19, 20, and 22) which were chosen for what native French speakers deemed to be of 'high-nuance' quality (refer to Appendix F). Despite the fact that these errors share a common quality, they essentially constitute a 'mixed bag.' Represented in this very limited group are Anglicisms, calques (literal translations), faux-amis (false-cognates), and lexical items subject to restricted distribution within a highly-defined context. These are only a few of the many types of errors which could conceivably be included in this category. The eleven remaining 'semantically-conditioned' errors were also characteristic of the types above.

The 'high-nuance' errors were expected to differentiate the 20 Advanced subjects from the other two groups, given that the Advanced group's 'sprachgefühl' was expected to be more developed and therefore more sensitive to this type of error. The results of the group performances on these errors demonstrate that, at least for this particular set of errors, this hypothesis is upheld. By looking at the group responses to Errors 20 and 22 (both high-nuance errors) which received identical treatment (see Appendix F), we note that the Beginners and Intermediates were completely desensitized. The Advanced group too, experienced obvious difficulty.

Given the limited sample of 20 Advanced speakers (who were, for the most part, all formally trained or immersed in French at some point), a more extensive statistical investigation of potential within-group differences was not reasonable. Ideally, one would want to conduct a response-coincidence type of analysis (Baker and Derwing, 1982) on a much larger and more heterogeneous sample. If subjects with diverse language learning backgrounds could be tested and subsequently analyzed in the above manner, then the validity of the test instrument and its potential implications could be further explored. Only given this optimal situation, could learner strategies and their relationships to cognitive styles and personality types be realistically pursued.

Nevertheless, within the restrictions of the present experimental framework, the errors selected and their respective semantic or syntactic characterization served the purpose for this study. The performance of the three different level subject groups was statistically differentiated on the basis of this corpus of errors and there was also evidence for potential discrimination within the Advanced group.

Rule-Type Usage and Group Performance

The statistical findings in the preceding section demonstrated that the use of both By Feel Rules and Real Rules increased as the proficiency level of the group

increased (see Figures 1 and 2). The profile of the 'Feel Rule for Real Rule' category remained relatively stable across groups when rule usage was calculated on the basis of relative percentages. As previously noted, the 'Feel Rule for Real Rule' profile would potentially be the most interesting of the three rule-type profiles given the grace of a longitudinal study. This category is, in some sense, a natural subset of the Real Rule category and reflects the number of instances a By Feel Rule is used when a Real Rule actually exists. If the nature of the By Feel Rules which comprise this profile were subjected to a qualitative analysis across the three groups, we would derive a clearer idea of what is really happening within this profile.

Interpreting the data as it stands does not allow us this insight. When scoring the Beginner's By Feel Rules, it was observed that they invariably consisted of simple, non-qualified statements such as "sounds funny" and nothing more. This is in contrast to the Advanced learners who often provided lengthy explanations, demonstrating their awareness of the external factors influencing the perception of the error. One can speculate as to whether or not the Feel Rule for Real Rule profile would increase over time with more immersion in the target language. Such a proposal reflects the idea that L_2 learners do become 'automated' language producers as their fluency in L_2 increases. Inherent in this notion is the belief that there is some propensity to 'forget' explicit grammatical rules (unless one has to teach

them). Consequently, some decrease in the Real Rule profile could be expected, whereas the Feel for Real profile would be incremented. Such an observation could only be made on a longitudinal basis. To seriously approach the issue in this manner would, however, require a very special subject group. The subjects in this group would presumably have to be 'products' of a formal initiation to the language, subsequently followed-up by a total immersion experience.

In returning briefly to the issue of the influence of formal training and immersion on rule-type usage, the data presented in Table 8 provide a picture of the breakdown of the respective group characteristics as outlined earlier. From Table 8, it is obvious that group samples were not amenable to a four-way split as required to accomodate the four categories. For some conditions there were empty cells, thereby precluding doing an analysis of the formal training and immersion effects. In future experiments controlled for equal 'n' distribution within each respective category, a productive investigation could presumably be conducted.

Synopsis of Some Questionnaire Findings

The administration of the Language Learning Questionnaire was a secondary and relatively minor part of this study. Basically, its design was a pilot attempt to try to determine whether or not eliciting information from each subject regarding his/her views on certain aspects of the L_2 acquisition process would provide some insight into possible

learning styles, personality factors, and attitudes toward L_2 learning in general. The results of the Questionnaire were not analyzed statistically. Many of the questions were concerned with language production. Since the task presented in this experiment was a comprehension task, no effort was made to correlate the questionnaire responses with the experimental results.

For discussion purposes, the responses of the Advanced group were tabulated and are reported here. The brief synopsis to follow refers to the Questionnaire found in Appendix E. Subjects were asked to either rank order or simply check the appropriate response. The answers to the first four questions were included as variables in the statistical analysis conducted on group performances as discussed in the experimental results section. The primary purpose of Question 5 was to determine, in general, what the L_2 learner's motives were for studying French. Responses (a), (b), and (f) could be considered as being 'instrumental' motives in comparison to (d), a more 'integrative' motive. Well over half of the 20 Advanced subjects chose (d), simply interested in the language and culture, as their motivation for studying French and also gave 'integrative' reasons in the (Other) response blank.

Although a detailed individual subject analysis was beyond the scope of this study, it would be interesting in future studies, with larger subject populations, to carefully examine individual learner responses to try to

determine possible relationships between their Questionnaire responses and their performance on the error-detection test. Given a more elaborate report of the above issue, one could possibly speculate about the effect, if any, of 'integrative' or 'instrumental' motivation on overall performance.

In Question 1, Part II of the Questionnaire, subjects were asked to rank in order of importance, factors they believed to have been most influential for their success in L_2 learning. The top three choices, in order of decreasing importance, were an immersion experience (with a mean rank score of 4.05 out of a scale of 1 through 5, 5 being most important), the teacher's method of teaching (3.61), and an interest in the culture of the language community (3.57). The teacher's personality and attitude, the student's personal study habits, and early exposure to the target language were next in line. Political reasons (Canadian bilingualism), and good language lab programs were considered least important.

Most of the Advanced learners claimed they were relatively satisfied with their language learning progress to date, felt they had average vocabularies in relation to native French speakers, believed they had good memories for language learning and were also either gifted or strong language learners. In terms of their sensitivity to being corrected for either grammatical mistakes or incorrect pronunciation, only 5 out of 20 indicated that they would be

embarrassed by this. Yet, for Question 6, which was a direct appeal to the 'avoiders' and 'guessers' (applicable only at the production level), there was a 50/50 split. Ten subjects claimed they would rather speak the language without making any mistakes even if this meant they could not say exactly what they wanted. This response was usually followed by a short explanation. In general, subjects reported that the desire to speak perfectly was conditioned by the particular social or cultural circumstances. Professional people (namely, academics) undoubtedly expressed this feeling more than others. Most all the subjects reported that they would circumlocute when stuck for a particular word or expression, or they would rely on description.

All the Advanced learners claimed to make concerted efforts to study vocabulary. Reading novels and magazines was preferred to the more aural methods of listening to the radio or watching television. Not surprisingly, the majority of subjects revealed that the aspect of French they wanted to improve the most was their range of vocabulary (including a better command of idiomatic expressions). Improving aural comprehension and writing style followed respectively. Regarding their attitudes toward language learning in general, 19 subjects reported that they liked learning new languages. However, half of them admitted that it would depend on the language. Only one reported that he would not want to do this at all. Based on their past experience with language learning, subjects felt that formal training and

immersion were equally important, and that their first approach in tackling a new language would be to travel to the target language country and to immerse themselves in the language.

When questioned about the idea of comparing L_1 with L_2 (as an acquisition strategy), over half the subjects said they thought it helped sometimes, especially in the case of comparing French and English lexical items. Others noted that such a strategy did not work quite so well for other languages. The overwhelming response to the final question regarding their perception of the nature of the language learning process, was that it must be (B), a 'conscious and systematic process.' In choosing this answer, however, they almost always commented that the (A) approach was probably most conducive for children, and also eventually for more advanced learners who already had a fairly well-established system. Some qualified this further, by stating that both processes were in fact indispensable for acquiring native-like proficiency in the target language.

Summary and Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to develop an evaluation metric for the 'sprachgefühl' phenomenon as presented in this thesis. The impetus for designing such a methodological tool to measure this phenomenon arose from the discovery that, in the metalinguistic judgement tasks developed thus far, L_2 researchers have been neglecting to

appeal to the L_2 learner's more intuitive, or incidentally learned knowledge about the target language. An intuitive mastery of the target language implies a mastery of the forms of the language, and the linguistic, cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural meanings denoted by the language forms. Like a native speaker, the L_2 learner must exhibit the capacity to use the language with maximum attention to meaning and minimum attention to form. Such a capacity ranges from zero to native-like fluency among different learners at different stages of learning.

Assessing an L_2 learner's proficiency in a target language requires a battery of different testing techniques designed to tap all aspects of his/her language production and comprehension. An L_2 learner's communicative competence is ideally assessed at the 'on-line' production level. Nevertheless, before L_2 learners can communicate in a target language, they must have an internalized system of rules and intuitions which enable them to produce and understand the language.

Metalinguistic judgement tasks are essentially tests which tap these internalized systems or 'interlanguages.' Linguistic manipulation tasks requiring the detection and correction of errors demand that the learner apply his knowledge of the language system and make critical evaluations.

As demonstrated by the findings of this experiment, the careful selection of errors following the procedures

outlined in this study can produce very sensitive test items with a high degree of discriminative power. The development of a dichotomy of errors, namely, 'semantically-conditioned' errors and 'syntactically-conditioned' errors, chosen from a corpus of actual L_2 learner production errors, provides a much more comprehensive technique for determining the nature of the L_2 learner's internalized language knowledge.

The test instrument designed for this experiment incorporated the corpus of errors within a contextual framework. The advantage of presenting errors in a restricted passage is that it provides a realistic context that helps to determine not only the grammatical acceptability, but also the appropriateness of a particular option. Contextual testing poses a further challenge to the L_2 learner's competency as it introduces him to the demands of what is appropriate within a specific context or communicative situation.

The restricted context used in this study forced the subjects to consider the implications of the social register employed and the respective status of the addresser and addressee. Using such a restricted context, however, has inherent limitations. The formal nature of the stylistics involved in such a letter may have been perceived as somewhat stilted to many of the subjects, especially those at the lower proficiency levels. Nonetheless, using such a register was advantageous from the standpoint that it helped to eliminate many of the idiosyncracies which arise when

dealing with more colloquial registers of French or different dialects. Also, caution was taken not to incorporate errors in the more formulaic expressions of this type of register, so that subjects would not be forced to demonstrate their knowledge of the niceties of formal French letter-writing.

Using one relatively formal register was clearly an arbitrary choice for the purposes of this experiment. Ideally, one would want to develop a heterogeneous repertoire of registers and communicative situations to produce a more global technique for testing all facets of an L_2 learner's internalized language system.

The errors chosen for these specified contexts could be carefully collected from the production data of L_2 learners at different stages of development in their approximations to the target language. The nature of these errors, whether they are semantically or syntactically conditioned, could then be determined by native speaker control groups and an entire corpus of test errors would then be available for testing with various specific contexts.

By implication, then, the findings from this particular study are extremely limited in terms of generalizability to other contexts. It is quite likely that an L_2 learner's formal and informal training in the target language will be differentially accessed by different specific contexts. This, of course, is only one of the many limitations of a task such as the 'paper-and-pen' task used here. An L_2

learner could be perfectly competent in other language modes (e.g., oral, aural, or reading), but not be particularly skilled at editing a written text. It is therefore important to keep in mind that the test instrument developed for this experiment would never be used on its own as a measure of linguistic competence, and it should not be construed as a replacement for a production test.

Since the comprehension and production of language are such incredibly complex processes, it is unreasonable to expect a comprehensive evaluation of an L_2 learner's target language proficiency based on the results of one test instrument. Instead, such an error-detection task should become an integral part of an entire array of testing techniques necessary to determine an L_2 learner's competence in various linguistic domains. If administered in a classroom testing programme on a regular basis, an error-detection task of the type developed in this study would provide both the teacher and the student with a clearer assessment of the student's competence in this particular domain. In this sense, such an error detection task can provide the testing programme with a new and useful dimension.

In terms of the theoretical implications in using this type of procedure to discover more about an L_2 learner's acquisition of linguistic knowledge, we can only speculate that the capacity to measure a learner's sprachgefühl will provide some insight into the development of the L_2

learner's degree of intuitive mastery of the target language. The evaluation metric developed for this experiment demonstrated a distinct discriminatory power. It clearly differentiated among the three subject groups in terms of their sprachgefühl sensitivity as indicated by group performance on individual errors. Of course, these groups were established on an a priori basis so as to provide an external criterion against which to evaluate each item since the focus of this study was on the instrument rather than on the groups. The next logical move is to test it on a random sample of L_2 learners of varying degrees of proficiency to see if they can be properly assigned to such groups in terms of their performance levels.

The findings reported here would lead one to expect that the evaluation metric would display the same discriminatory power on such a sample in relation to the group differentiation established by other standard measures. The design of better testing techniques is only one of the many steps still to be taken. While a systematic investigation of learner related variables was beyond the scope of this study, the importance of these factors was clearly recognized. The development of more effective evaluative measures of the relationship of cognitive styles and personality characteristics to L_2 acquisition must also continue. The combined research efforts in these two areas should eventually help to dispel some of the mystery involved in the L_2 acquisition process. The experiment

discussed in this thesis is a reasonable representation of one small step in this direction.

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APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBJECTS

On the following pages you will read a letter written by a native English-speaking female student. She is requesting information from the chairman of a Graduate Studies program in French.

On PAGES 1,2 you will simply READ the letter through once.

On PAGES 3,4,5 you will PROOF-READ the letter for this student.

The PROOF-READING task involves the following steps. Read them carefully and follow them sequentially:

FIRST, please UNDERLINE in PEN any errors you think you have found, including any word, words or sentences which simply don't seem right to you for whatever reason.

SECOND, check the errors you've underlined and CORRECT them the best way you can, using the space provided below each sentence. To CORRECT means to provide an alternative word or sentence which you think better suits for either grammatical or stylistic reasons. Remember that you are performing a PROOF-READING JOB and you want to PERFECT this letter.

THIRD, READ the letter again and take note of any errors you may have missed on the first pass. UNDERLINE these errors with PENCIL and CORRECT them as you did the first time.

FOURTH, now NUMBER ALL THE ERRORS YOU HAVE FOUND.

FIFTH, now that you have completed your proof-reading job, pretend you have to explain to the French student WHY you made the corrections that you did. In other words, on the page directly opposite from your corrections try to give a RULE for each correction made. If you do not know the rule or do not think that a rule may exist for your correction, simply give a reason why you think it needed to be corrected even if your reason may simply be that it "just didn't feel or sound right somehow". TRY TO GIVE SOME KIND OF EXPLANATION IN EVERY CASE.

LASTLY, please take note of the amount of time it took you to complete this task. ___ minutes

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX B: STIMULUS MATERIAL

le 2 avril 1984

Monsieur directeur,

Je vous écris au sujet de votre programme d'études de deuxième cycle en la littérature française. Je suis diplomée avec une licence de lettres de l'Université Laval où j'ai étudié pendant les quatres derniers ans. Cet été j'ai été dans le nord de la France pour trois mois et je me suis beaucoup intéressée dans la littérature du moyen âge français. Pendant mon séjour j'avais la bonne opportunité de faire la connaissance de l'éminent professeur LeClaire dont j'ai su par après qu'il est un ancien collègue de vous. Professeur LeClaire m'a informée que votre département est specialisé à la littérature française du moyen âge et que vous offrez à vos étudiants le possibilité de faire une partie de leur études outre-mer.

Pour ces raisons, je voudrais me procurer des renseignements plus précis sur votre programme afin de savoir si je peux me présenter comme une candidate susceptible de recevoir une bourse d'études. Pour vous aider à évaluer mes qualifications je peux vous envoyer la thèse que j'ai faite pour ma licence si vous voudriez la lire.

Durant les étés de 1977,1978 et 1979 j'ai travaillé comme consultante en histoire médiévale au Musée de Beaux-Arts et également à la classification de manuscrits du 15e siècle, la plupart d'eux étaient de Rutebeuf et de Villon. Je crois que ce travail m'a donné des idées valables

de tout la période médiévale dans telle manière que je voudrais poursuivre mes études dans ce domaine.

Veuillez-vous trouver ci-joint copie de mon curriculum vitae. Je serais heureuse de vous envoyer d'autres informations si vous en aurez besoin. Je voulais vous remercier d'avance de votre coopération et en attendant le plaisir de recevoir votre réponse, je vous prie monsieur, d'agréer l'expression de mes sentiments respectueux.

Marie Williams

APPENDIX C: RESPONSE SHEET

UNDERLINE AND CORRECT on these pages.

1. Monsieur directeur,

1. _____

2. Je vous écris au sujet de votre programme d'études

2. _____

3. de deuxième cycle en la littérature française. Je suis

3. _____

4. diplomée avec une licence de lettres de l'Université Laval

4. _____

5. où j'ai étudié pendant les quatres derniers ans.

5. _____

6. Cet été j'ai été dans le nord de la France pour trois

6. _____

7. mois et je me suis intéressée beaucoup dans la littérature

7. _____

8. du moyen âge français. Pendant mon séjour j'avais

8. _____

9. la bonne opportunité de faire la connaissance de l'éminent

9. _____

10. professeur le docteur Maurice LeClaire dont j'ai su par après

10. _____

11. qu'il est un ancien collègue de vous. Professeur LeClaire m'a

11. _____

12. informée que votre département est specialisé à la

12. _____

13. littérature française du moyen âge et que vous offrez à vos

13. _____

14. étudiants le possibilité de faire une partie de leur études

14. _____

15. outre-mer. Pour ces raisons, je voudrais me procurer des

15. _____

16. renseignements plus précis sur votre programme afin de savoir

16. _____

17. si je peux me présenter comme une candidate

17. _____

18. susceptible de recevoir une bourse d'études. Pour

18. _____

19. vous aider à évaluer mes qualifications je peux

19. _____

20. vous envoyer la thèse que j'ai faite pour ma licence

20. _____

21. si vous voudriez la lire. Durant les étés de 1977,

21. _____

22. 1978 et 1979 j'ai travaillé comme consultante en
22. _____
23. histoire médiévale au Musée de Beaux-Arts et également
23. _____
24. à la classification de manuscrits de 15e siècle la plupart
24. _____
25. d'eux étaient de Rutebeuf et de Villon. Je crois que
25. _____
26. ce travail m'a donné des idées valables de
26. _____
27. tout la période médiévale dans telle manière que
27. _____
28. je voudrais poursuivre mes études dans ce domaine.
28. _____
29. Veuillez-vous trouver ci-joint copie de mon curriculum vitae.
29. _____
30. Je serais heureuse de vous envoyer d'autres informations si
30. _____
31. vous en aurez besoin. Je voulais vous remercier d'avance
31. _____
32. de votre coopération et en attendant le plaisir de recevoir
32. _____

33. votre réponse, je vous prie monsieur, d'agréer

l'expression

33. _____

34. de mes sentiments respectueux.

34. _____

APPENDIX D: SCORE SHEET

Subject No. ----------

1. Monsieur le(1) directeur,

1. _____

2. Je vous écris au sujet de votre programme d'études

2. _____

3. de deuxième cycle en la(2) littérature française. Je suis

3. _____

4. diplomee avec une licence de lettres(3) de l'Université Laval

4. _____

5. où j'ai étudié pendant les quatres derniers ans.(4)

5. _____

6. Cet été j'ai été(5) dans le nord de la France pour(6) trois

6. _____

7. mois et je me suis intéressée beaucoup (7) dans(8) la littérature

7. _____

8. du moyen âge français. Pendant mon séjour j'avais(9)

8. _____

9. la bonne opportunité(10) de faire la connaissance de l'éminent

9. _____

10. professeur le docteur(11) Maurice LeClaire dont j'ai su(12) par après

10. _____

11. qu'il est un ancien collègue de vous.(13) Professeur LeClaire m'a

11. _____

12. informée que votre département est specialisé(14) à(15) la

12. _____

13. littérature française du moyen âge et que vous offrez à vos

13. _____

14. étudiants le(16) possibilité de faire une partie de leur(17) études

14. _____

15. outre-mer. Pour ces raisons,(18) je voudrais me procurer des

15. _____

16. renseignements plus précis sur votre programme afin de savoir

16. _____

17. si je peux me présenter comme une candidate

17. _____

18. susceptible(19) de recevoir une bourse d'études. Pour

18. _____

19. vous aider à évaluer mes qualifications(20)je peux

19. _____

20. vous envoyer la thèse que j'ai faite pour ma licence

20. _____

21. si vous **voudriez**(21) la lire. Durant les étés de 1977,

21. _____

22. 1978 et 1979 j'ai travaillé comme **consultante** (22) en

22. _____

23. histoire médiévale au Musée **de**(23) Beaux-Arts et également

23. _____

24. à la classification de manuscrits de 15e siècle la plupart

24. _____

25. **d'eux**(24) étaient de Rutebeuf et de Villon. Je crois que

25. _____

26. ce travail m'a donné des idées valables **de**(25)

26. _____

27. **tout**(26) la période médiévale **dans telle manière**(27) que

27. _____

28. je voudrais poursuivre mes études dans ce domaine.

28. _____

29. Veuillez-**vous**(28) trouver ci-joint copie de mon curriculum vitae.

29. _____

30. Je serais heureuse de vous envoyer d'autres informations si

30. _____

31. vous en **aurez**(29) besoin. Je **voulais**(30) vous remercier d'avance

31. _____

32. de votre coopération et en attendant le plaisir de recevoir

32. _____

33. votre réponse, je vous prie monsieur, d'agréer l'expression

33. _____

34. de mes sentiments respectueux.

34. _____

APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

Subject No. _____

LANGUAGE LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

A. PERSONAL DATA

1. NAME _____

2. AGE GROUP
- ☐ 18 and under
- ☐ 19 - 25
- ☐ 26 - 35
- ☐ 36 - 50
- ☐ 51 - 65

3. SEX
- ☐ MALE
- ☐ FEMALE

4. LEVEL OF EDUCATION (Number of years in college/university)
Circle: 1 2 3 4 Masters Phd.

5. MAJOR AREA OF STUDY _____

6. BIRTHPLACE _____

7. WHERE HAVE YOU LIVED MOST OF YOUR LIFE?
City _____ Prov/State _____ Country _____

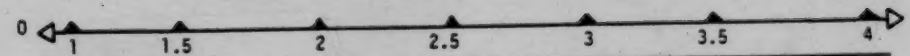
8. List other places you have lived and the approximate amount of time spent in each place :
i. _____ _____ ___ years
ii. _____ _____ ___ years
iii. _____ _____ ___ years

B. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

1. What is the first language (L_1) you were exposed to? _____
the second (L_2) _____
the third (L_3) _____

2. On the next page you will read a table outlining three different language proficiency levels. PLEASE READ THIS TABLE CAREFULLY. You will be asked to RATE on the scale provided what you believe to be your OWN PROFICIENCY in each of the languages you have had contact with.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS



	ELEMENTARY	WORKING KNOWLEDGE	ADVANCED (NATIVE-LIKE)
READING	I am able to read the written form of the language; I can read a simple text aloud correctly, I can read simple directions, common public signs, menus, elementary stories, especially constructed for beginners, titles of books and captions, with or without a dictionary.	I can read writings of professional interest, familiar news items, popular modern fiction, eg., detective stories(with occasional use of dictionary).	I am able to read almost as easily as in native language, material of considerable difficulty; literary writings, professional literature; I can read with almost no difficulty, research articles and background readings in my field or profession (with occasional reference to dictionary).
WRITING	I can use the language's writing system and copy simple sentences with ease can compose simple sentences, eg., as demanded in elementary text books.	I can write a simple "free "free" composition, such as a personal letter; can write memos or notes in my field.	I can write on subjects of concern to myself, eg., reports on professional matters; I am able to deal with all personal and professional correspondence.
UNDERSTANDING	I can make essential word (sound-syllable) discriminations; understand simple statements and questions on topics very familiar to me(meals,purchases etc.) I can only understand utterances spoken at a slower rate than normal speech.	I can understand most casual conversations on familiar topics, related to my family, work, daily events etc. I can get the gist of plays, films, radio, talks etc.	I am able to follow conversations of native speakers at normal speed; I can fully understand lectures, professional discussions, radio talks, plays, jokes, different language styles and dialects.
SPEAKING	I can mimic most of the essential sounds characteristic of the language with fair accuracy; I can express elementary needs, eg., order a meal, ask for directions; I make many errors but I am understood by native speakers who are used to dealing with foreign speakers	I can express myself on matters of concern to me with sufficient fluency and accuracy. To be understood by native speakers I may "take the long way round" of saying something and use description when I don't know the exact word; I can talk about daily events, my work, my family, my hobbies, etc.	I have a broad vocabulary; make few grammatical errors; can participate in ANY conversation or discussion with a high degree of fluency approximating native accent; I can express myself in different social situations (on different levels - colloquial and educated).

3. Now, PLEASE RATE YOURSELF according to the criteria you have just read. Use the scale which is just above the three categories. Write the rating you have selected in the boxes provided below.
EXAMPLE: If the second language you have learned (L_2) is Spanish and you feel that you have a fairly good grasp of reading in that language, you may write 2.8 in the row for READING under the L_2 column.

	L_1	L_2	L_3
READING			
WRITING			
UNDERSTANDING			
SPEAKING			

4. How did you learn FRENCH?

(A) FORMALLY?
- ☐ school
- ☐ university
- ☐ private instruction
- ☐ formal course taken in country of language being learned

(B) INFORMALLY? (non-school situation)
- ☐ travel
- ☐ living in the country of the langauge being learned. How long?____weeks/months/years
- ☐ home/parent(s)
- ☐ neighbourhood
- ☐ friends
- ☐ work
- ☐ independent study

(C) A COMBINATION OF BOTH? ☐

5. What are your PRIMARY REASONS for studying French?

- ☐ a. want to teach French
- ☐ b. job promotion or more job choice
- ☐ c. want to "get by" while travelling
- ☐ d. simply interested in the language and culture
- ☐ e. want to acquire reading skills only
- ☐ f. will be living/working in a French milieu
- ☐ g. Other _____

II

1. What FACTORS do you consider to be the MOST INFLUENTIAL in language learning; i.e., to what extent to you attribute YOUR SUCCESS in learning languages?

PLEASE ORDER the following factors in terms of IMPORTANCE to you on a scale of 5 - (EXTREMELY IMPORTANT) to 1 - (LEAST IMPORTANT OF ALL)

- [ ] the teacher's personality and attitude
- [ ] the teacher's method of teaching
- [ ] the classroom environment
- [ ] your own special study habits
- [ ] early exposure to the language
- [ ] an immersion experience
- [ ] an interest in the culture of the language community
- [ ] professional advancement
- [ ] positive parental influence
- [ ] political reasons (Canada being a bilingual country)
- [ ] an extroverted personality; self-confidence, sociability
- [ ] good textbooks
- [ ] good language lab programs

2. Within your present language learning situation are you satisfied with YOUR ACHIEVEMENT in French to date?

YES ☐ RELATIVELY ☐ NO ☐

3. Do you feel you have reached a satisfactory level in French for YOUR PARTICULAR PURPOSES?

YES ☐ RELATIVELY ☐ NO ☐

4. CHECK ONE ONLY. Do you think you

- [ ] have a "gift" for language learning
- [ ] are "strong" in language learning
- [ ] are an "average" language learner
- [ ] are a "weak" language learner

5. Do you believe you have a "good memory" for learning languages?

YES ☐ AVERAGE ☐ NO ☐

6. CHECK ONE ONLY. Which is more important to you?

(A) ☐ Communicating your ideas even though you know you are making many grammar mistakes.

(B) ☐ Speaking the language without making mistakes, even if this means that you can't say exactly what you want.

7. If a native speaker of French (NOT your instructor) corrects a GRAMMATICAL ERROR that you have made, do you

(A) ☐ feel uncomfortable and avoid using the same construction later

(B) ☐ feel grateful for the interest, pay special attention to that correction so you can extend it to other situations.

8. If a native speaker of French (NOT your instructor) corrects a PRONUNCIATION MISTAKE do you

(A) ☐ feel embarrassed and avoid using the word later

(B) ☐ repeat it to yourself; make a note of it for future reference

(C) ☐ ignore it

9. If you are talking to someone and you don't remember or don't know the exact word you need, do you

(A) ☐ make up your own words

(B) ☐ use an English word

(C) ☐ describe it

(D) ☐ use a different construction with a different set of words

(E) ☐ use a synonym (another word that almost means the same thing)

10. How would you rate your French vocabulary?

LARGE ☐ AVERAGE ☐ SMALL ☐

11. Do you make an effort to learn <u>new</u> vocabulary? YES ☐ NO ☐
If you answered Yes, HOW do you <u>do</u> it?

☐ watching French T.V. programs

☐ listening to radio programs in French

☐ reading: novels, magazines

☐ dictionary

☐ French friends

☐ making vocabulary charts, index cards, etc.

☐ Other _____

12. If you could work on one thing INTENSIVELY in French now (an aspect that you feel needs IMPROVEMENT) what would it be?

RATE in ORDER OF IMPORTANCE to you: 5 - most important 1 - least important
(use ALL the numbers 1 - 5)

- ☐ improve reading
- ☐ improve writing style
- ☐ improve aural comprehension, i.e., understanding what you hear
- ☐ expand vocabulary (including more idiomatic every day expressions.)
- ☐ improve pronunciation, phrasing

13. Do you like learning new language? YES ☐ INDIFFERENT ☐ NO ☐

14. Do you think your attitude would depend on the language? YES ☐ NO ☐

15. If you were OBLIGATED to learn another language how would you feel?

- ☐ I'd be quite enthusiastic about it
- ☐ I'd be moderately enthusiastic about it
- ☐ I wouldn't mind doing it
- ☐ It would make me feel a bit anxious
- ☐ I wouldn't want to do it at all

16. What do you consider to be the IDEAL condition for learning a new language? BASED ON YOUR PAST EXPERIENCE, what would you do FIRST of all?

a ☐ Travel to the country and simply immerse yourself in the language
b ☐ Travel to the country and take a language course there
c ☐ Buy a text or take a correspondence course and study on your own
d ☐ Go to a teacher or a language school for private lessons
e ☐ Join a language class
f ☐ A COMBINATION OF THESE? Which ones? _____

17. Some people believe that in learning a new language you must completely forget your native language.
Others say you cannot or should not.

7.

To what extent do you find that COMPARING your NATIVE LANGUAGE with the language you are learning HELPS YOU in learning the new language?

☐ 1. a great deal, rely on it heavily
☐ 2. helps sometimes
☐ 3. is more of a hindrance
☐ 4. haven't thought about it

Any extra comments? _____

18. (A) Some people say that you cannot make a conscious effort in learning a foreign language. They hate to study grammar; they say you must simply allow the language to sink in gradually.

(B) Others argue that language learning is a conscious and systematic process. You set about it by studying, by constantly asking for explanations and rules. In short, by actively thinking about it.

Which of these ideas would more represent YOUR POINT OF VIEW?

☐ (A) or (B) ☐

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

APPENDIX F: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ERROR BY GROUPS

Err.	Det.	Cor.	Response Code	GROUPS Begin.	Inter.	Advan.	Total
			-1	16	11	1	28
01	.53	.53	0	0	0	0	0
			+1	4	9	19	32
			-1	15	7	1	23
02	.62	.43	0	4	7	0	11
			+1	1	6	19	26
			-1	15	11	4	30
03	.50	.18	0	5	8	6	19
			+1	0	1	10	11
			-1	14	12	5	31
04	.48	.12	0	6	7	9	22
			+1	0	1	6	7
			-1	12	6	1	19
05	.68	.45	0	5	9	0	14
			+1	3	5	19	27
			-1	19	12	1	32
06	.47	.42	0	0	1	2	3
			+1	1	7	17	25
			-1	18	14	6	38
07	.37	.32	0	1	2	0	3
			+1	1	4	14	19
			-1	13	7	1	21
08	.65	.42	0	6	8	0	14
			+1	1	5	19	25
			-1	15	12	5	32
09	.47	.38	0	4	1	0	5
			+1	1	7	15	23
			-1	20	15	1	36
10	.40	.33	0	0	2	2	4
			+1	0	3	17	20

APPENDIX F (cont'd)

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ERROR BY GROUPS

Err.	Det.	Cor.	Response Code	GROUPS Begin.	Inter.	Advan.	Total
			-1	18	19	10	47
11	.22	.15	0	1	0	3	4
			+1	1	1	7	9
			-1	16	7	2	25
12	.58	.37	0	2	7	4	13
			+1	2	6	14	22
			-1	18	16	3	37
13	.38	.33	0	1	1	1	3
			+1	1	3	16	20
			-1	13	13	3	29
14	.52	.28	0	6	4	4	14
			+1	1	3	13	17
			-1	17	9	3	29
15	.52	.43	0	1	3	1	5
			+1	2	8	16	26
			-1	17	9	3	29
16	.52	.48	0	0	2	0	2
			+1	3	9	17	29
			-1	19	14	7	40
17	.33	.32	0	0	1	0	1
			+1	1	5	13	19
			-1	20	18	14	52
18	.13	.08	0	0	1	2	3
			+1	0	1	4	5
			-1	18	16	2	36
19	.40	.17	0	2	4	8	14
			+1	0	0	10	10
			-1	20	20	16	56
20	.07	.05	0	0	0	1	1
			+1	0	0	3	3

APPENDIX F (cont'd)

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ERROR BY GROUPS

Err.	Det.	Cor.	Response Code	GROUPS Begin.	Inter.	Advan.	Total
			-1	18	15	3	36
21	.40	.23	0	2	3	5	10
			+1	0	2	12	14
			-1	20	20	16	56
22	.07	.05	0	0	0	1	1
			+1	0	0	3	3
			-1	20	18	11	49
23	.18	.18	0	0	0	0	0
			+1	0	2	9	11
			-1	18	9	1	28
24	.53	.38	0	1	6	2	9
			+1	1	5	17	23
			-1	20	17	7	44
25	.27	.20	0	0	1	3	4
			+1	0	2	10	12
			-1	17	11	1	29
26	.52	.50	0	0	0	1	1
			+1	3	9	18	30
			-1	20	16	0	36
27	.40	.30	0	0	2	4	6
			+1	0	2	16	18
			-1	17	18	5	40
28	.33	.25	0	3	2	0	5
			+1	0	0	15	15
			-1	19	15	8	42
29	.30	.13	0	1	4	5	10
			+1	0	1	7	8
			-1	16	9	0	25
30	.58	.53	0	0	3	0	3
			+1	4	8	20	32